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ABSTRACT

This four-part paper is designed to serve as a conceptual framework for use as a scheme in the selection and organization of content for the Wisconsin home economics curriculum. In the introductory section the task to be accomplished is set forth and a framework established for the development of the paper. In section 2, attention is given to the nature of a conceptual scheme, its uses with respect to justifying curriculum content, and factors influencing the choice of a scheme for selecting and organizing the content of curriculum. Section 3 is devoted to the nature of home economics and implications for school curriculum content. Specific topics discussed include (1) the problem or orientation of home economics, (2) mode of inquiry appropriate for home economics, (3) a conceptual structure for home economics, and (4) implications of the nature of home economics for curriculum content. The final part of the paper summarizes by presenting decision-rules for the selection and organization of content. (LRA)

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A CONCEPTUAL SCHEME AND DECISION-RULES FOR THE SELECTION AND ORGANIZATION OF HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM CONTENT

(Wisconsin Home Economics Curriculum and Evaluation Project)
by
Marjorie M. Brown, Ph.D.

Produced for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Barbara Thompson, Ph.D. State Superintendent

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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FOREWORD

The Wisconsin Home Economics Conceptual Guide Council was formed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in late 1975. The main purpose of the Council was to develop a state curriculum policy for home economics in the public elementary and secondary schools of the 1980's.

This paper by Dr. Marjorie Brown was written especially at the request of the Council in its continuing effort to achieve three major objectives.

I. Set forth a perspective on the family that is unique to home economics.

II. Adapt or develop a curriculum method that is consistent with this perspective on the family.

III. Identify end goals that are consistent with this perspective of the discipline and develop a method for the evaluation of these goals.

This paper is being used to assist the Council and their associates in the examination and the choice of assumptions for a state-wide curriculum policy and the construction of the required procedures and products for this policy's implementation.

Each of the three objectives were set into a context in which the work was to be accomplished. In all cases, the context must first be created before the work associated with the objectives could begin. Dr. Brown's work was commissioned to aid the Council in clarifying the context in which the Council would direct their research and development efforts. The three objectives are in hierarchical order.

Before work was begun on the first objective, there was a careful review of the intellectual history of home economics. The manner by which particular perspectives influence professional action was observed. Dr. Brown furthered the Council's knowledge in this area and clarified the intellectual orientation appropriate for a profession who claims a right to social policy leadership. Dr. Brown has also provided guidance in constructing the context for the second objective in that she delienated the basic assumptions inherent to three basic education philosophical frameworks found in current use. At this writing, work is progressing on the second objective and initial work is started developing the context for the third objective where Dr. Brown's work is being used to construct the guidelines that will determine the type of evaluation appropriate for a family focused home economics education policy.

There were several factors that influenced the Council's decision to commission this paper. First, Wisconsin was using a family-oriented conceptual structure developed a decade earlier. This existing structure, although schematic, set forth a conceptual organization of the home economics substantive areas around three primary family functions. A majority of the Council had used this structure as classroom teachers and knew the value of a conceptual approach that unified the field's subject matter. Therefore, any conception of home economics or curriculum methodology which seemed to fragment the field into disparate parts was resisted. It was recognized, however, that a change from a family-oriented to a family-focused conceptualization would necessitate a change in perspective.

A second factor that influenced the Council was the political activity occuring prior to the congressional passage of the 1976 Vocational Education Amendments. The impact of vocational education legislation on the nature of home economics education has been profound. The charged atmosphere surrounding professional discussion of the reauthorization issues motivated a careful examination of the major intellectual traditions existing within home economics practice and literature. The objective of the examination was to compare the potential effectiveness of the existing intellectual traditions against that which would underlie a proposed public education program with a goal to develop individual competence for solving family related problems. The initial Council decisions in this area provided the setting for the critical acceptance of the intellectual organization that Dr. Brown consequently defined in this paper.

The last factor may be, more than any other, the actual key to the activity that is on-going. The Council is a group of relatively young professionals whose future, which will be longer than their past, partially depends upon the intellectual vitality of the home economics profession. Thus, there was a conscious search for scholars who could contribute to the creation of an atmosphere of spirited exchange and criticism of ideas. It was felt that only in such an environment could the risks necessary to research and development activity on the scale proposed be taken. Thus, the last factor that greatly influenced the Council was the need to learn and practice the rules of intellectual work. Previous, but brief, work with Dr. Brown taught the Council the necessity for taking responsibility for the substance of one's criticism. To mention this factor may seem banal. But the Council learned some of the rules of intellectual ethics from Dr. Brown. Our choice to commission this paper was an effort to continue to work with an individual who followed the rules.

This paper, titled *A Conceptual Scheme and Decision Rules for the Selection and Organization of Home Economics Curriculum Content*, must be considered as a whole to realize its import for the field. However, there are several points made by Brown which could provide impetus for a change in the current applied science orientation of the field and therefore the common orientation of home economics in the public schools. Acceptance of these points, of course, assumes that the limitations inherent to an applied science for professional ideational leadership are understood.

It has been common for home economics educators to place great emphasis on the conceptual relationships that are inherent in its subject matter. Brown, however, delineates the type of concepts that are of particular interest to home economics: "The 'study of *relation'* in home economics concerns the connection of values which regulate action or conduct regarding the home and family and knowledge from scientific inquiry" (p. 15). The richness of this kind of inquiry becomes clearer when placed in the context of her conceptualization of home economics as a profession where expertise is an aid in the resolution of the perennial practical problems faced by the family.

She clarifies the much misunderstood distinction between practical studies and technical studies by differentiating between the formulation of a problem and its solution. "The danger is that problems will be defined only in terms of physical and social entities of the environment because that is where the *solution* lies. The problem *formulation* process is a different one and requires that we have a conceptual understanding of (1) the 'well-being of individuals and families' and (2) the qualities of environment which affect that well-being and of how they affect it" (p. 17).

It is generally believed that home economics must become identified for ideational leadership in addition to its traditional managerial leadership if it is to maintain professional respectability for its claim of focusing its efforts in problem-solving on the family. For example, in 1975, AHEA's *New Direction II* stated several new professional priorities including 1) Futuristic Thinking and Planning, 2) Public Policy Formulation, 3) Creative Adaptation to Uncertainty and Change, and 4) Redistribution of Resources. If the profession accepts these priorities as worthy of pursuit, the profession must make a leap from predominately technical problem formulations to the practical problem formulations basic to a social policy science. Marjorie Brown has begun to identify the rules by which the leap can be made.

The implications of this leap for the public schools are far-reaching. The first task is to recognize clearly the manner by which the home economics education profession is functioning within the total school curriculum. The second is to prepare professionals with the intellectual background necessary to formulate problems that will permit home economists to be educational leaders in the area of family.

Dr. Brown warns of an error too often discovered only during the bruising confrontations that occur in the process of carving a significant role for home economics in the formation of public policy. This process includes the problems that accompany the attempt to redefine the role of home economics in the public schools as the part of the curriculum with a specific responsibility for developing competence to solve significant family problems. The error involves the assumption that home economics is distinct from other occupations by its claim of performing service to families. "Service to families does not make home economics unique. . . . The family is the subject of study in many disciplines: philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, genetics and theology, among others. Among the learned professions medicine, law, architecture, and social work provide services to families and among the less learned occupations, so do garbage collectors, utility service persons and appliance repairmen" (p. 21). This truth is admitted without falling into the applied science argument to justify the legitimacy of the field (p. 24). Rather Dr. Brown proposes that the mode of inquiry is similar to . . .what has been called 'critical science' and 'policy science'" (p. 24).

It is unfortunate that in the past years the curriculum enterprise has become to such an extent a collection of conflicting procedures and technicalities that to many educators curriculum consists of knowing the correct form for writing a generalization or instructional objective. It should not come as a surprise that many educators consider curriculum irrelevent to their teaching and a nuisance demanded by their administrators. It appears to have been forgotten that the curriculum is what is actually being taught, regardless of the thick document that is shown to visitors in the school superintendent's office. What is taught is dependent upon the educator's internalized concept of his discipline. If his concept is inadequate so will be the classroom curriculum experienced by the student. Consequently to achieve significant change in the classrooms of Wisconsin, it was deemed necessary to reexamine the underlying structure of the field so that a conceptual structure can be learned by the practitioner which will permit him to revolutionize his curriculum. This paper provides a framework which can be used by those responsible for the quality of home economics instruction.

When curriculum is defined as a document, success is evaluated in terms of the detail of the technicality and length of a completed product. But when curriculum is viewed primarily as a process by which teachers systematically reconstruct knowledge and experience, then curriculum takes its position as the innovative force within formal education. The commissioning and publication of this paper is one method by which the Department of Public Instruction seeks to guide Wisconsin home economics educators in a curriculum process allowing them to develop the student competence for solving the enduring and persistent issues facing families.

The documents that emerge from the processes begun by the Department must serve as tools to continue and extend the curriculum process. The ideas contained in this paper provide an excellent basis for their criticism.

Dena G. Stoner, Chair
Wisconsin Home Economics
Conceptual Guide Council
June, 1978

PREFACE

A few prefatory remarks are appropriate for this paper, the general topic of which deals with decision rules for selecting home economics curriculum content in Wisconsin public schools, K-12. The paper is not a finished product, but there is no more time or energy to compose another draft. I deliberately decided that it would be most helpful for me to detail as much as possible rather than provide less food for thought but in a more polished form. I realize that there are rough parts and inadequately developed parts; I only hope that, with thought, the entire paper will be understandable and useable.

It was necessary for me to assume a conceptual background on the part of readers since this paper did not permit providing that background as well. For example, the reader needs an understanding of different types of beliefs— analytic, empirical, and value. Readers will be helped if they are familiar with different epistemological stances and especially of contemporary schools of metascience. For those who understand the philosophic equivalence of practical reasoning and moral or prudential judgment, there will be a different interpretation of practical problems than for those who consider practical knowledge to be lowly since, in itself, it is not theoretical.

I am not averse to criticism of what is written here and will join in that critical examination. However, I hope that readers first seek diligently to understand what I have tried to say. There is no perfect language for communication; our interpretation of what any one seeks to communicate is dependent on our own motives as well as upon our conceptual framework. There may be some people who will say that the paper is too long. I believe that it is really not long enough, especially the section on the nature of home economics.

Each of the parts of the section on home economics could be a major portion of a book—or an entire book—in order adequately to explicate and connect each of the concepts. Our field has suffered greatly because a more detailed conceptualization was not developed and written for the record early in our history. Our efforts in this area continue to be inadequate in that they are too hurriedly done and too tersely stated for us to clarify our direction and improve our scholarship. The results have been ambiguity in meaning and occasionally intellectual unsoundness. My efforts are also limited but I have tried to explicate concepts to some degree and to provide an internally consistent set of assumptions about home economics as well as curriculum. The extent to which I have succeeded remains to be judged by us all. How good it would have been to have had at least a year when thinking and writing could be done without doing them on top of an already full work load!

Efficiency never seems to me to be an end in itself. Whipping or grinding out something quickly—whether a metatheory, a position paper, or a curriculum project—may in the long run be very inefficient. We always have to ask ourselves "Efficient for what?" for expediency has its negative costs as well as presumed benefits; it behooves us to look beyond the immediate in appraising both. A negative judgment of the Wisconsin curriculum project is not intended. On the contrary, I support your directions. It may take longer than you have in mind to accomplish what you hope; it strikes me as a very large task. The process of performing this task may well provide the impetus for a badly needed change in intellectual and value orientations in home economics. I believe that serious students of home economics, including many home economics teachers, are hungry for and seeking leadership and new directions.

Something should be noted about the citations in the paper. Normally I prefer to write from my own organization of thought, from the countless and sometimes unremembered sources which have stimulated it, without continuous documentation. However, because the paper necessarily was brief in dealing with some very complex issues, it seemed appropriate that I provide references and quotations to interest readers in further exploration if they wished. The quotations from home economics literature were included to document the position here with earlier materials. I admit that there are times when I may have been putting words in the founders' mouths because of the lack of theoretical statements in the early record. By reading different brief statements by the same person, one receives a contextual flavor in keeping with a period in intellectual history. I have tried to be faithful to history when I interpreted such statements in the paper.

There is a line of reasoning or train of thought through the entire paper. I realize that such a long train of thought is more difficult to follow than if later parts of the paper did not depend on what has gone before for understanding. It is a highly complex task to deal with differentiation and integration at the same time one is attempting to clarify and extend the earlier philosophic propositions about home economics. Failure to try to go beyond the superficial would also belittle the intelligence of those who, through critical reflection, study the paper and who would go beyond what I have tried to do here.

The paper is divided into four major parts. They are Part I, Introduction; Part II, A Scheme for Selection and Organization of Curriculum Content: Its Nature, Uses and Choice; Part III, Home Economics: Its Nature and Implications for School Curriculum Content, and Part IV, Decision-Rules for Selecting and Organizing Home Economics Curriculum Content. In Part I the task to be accomplished is set forth and a framework established for the development of the paper.

Part II is an exploration of the nature of a conceptual scheme for selecting curriculum content. To consider the home economics content of curriculum, some conscious frame of reference is needed. Since different frames of reference about curriculum would lead to different orientations regarding the content of home economics curriculum, it seemed essential to make explicit three different frames of reference currently predominant in both school practice and curriculum literature. I am not in this section arguing for one frame of reference as better than another. However, a frame of reference was chosen when a curriculum aim was selected. The desired frame of reference was the cognitive developmental approach to curriculum process. All I am seeking to do in this section is to show what such selection means with respect to curriculum content. It seemed to me that I could best do this by comparing the cognitive developmental approach with two others since clear conceptualization requires non-instances as well as instances of the concept. Inadequate conceptualization regarding the nature of curriculum content is likely to lead to engaging in practices in curriculum development inconsistent with the curriculum aim and strategy.

Part III of the paper is devoted to the nature of home economics and implications for school curriculum content given the frame of reference for the curriculum aim and strategy already chosen. This part is divided into four sub-sections.

The first sub-section (A) defines home economics as a problem-oriented field of study. In beginning with such a definition, the intent was to classify home economics with such honored professions as medicine, law, engineering, and social work, among others, as distinguished from the basic disciplines. This initial classification, concerned with human problems rather than theoretic questions, is necessary in order to show the nature of the subject matter as well as the appropriate mode of inquiry. I have sought to clarify the essential qualities of the problems with which home economics is concerned. We must be able to distinguish the human problems of our field from those of other professions as well as from the theoretic problems of basic disciplines. This effort at clarification proceeds through four main headings.

In the first heading, The Concern for Practical Problems, I have, in pointing up the nature of practical problems, sought to distinguish them from theoretic concerns pursued for their own sake. While I have written in the context of home economics, what is stated about the concern for practical problems could also be stated about other professions where the practice of one's field involves the use of a difficult and esoteric body of knowledge *in judgment and action* to serve certain needs of society.

In the second heading, The Perennial Nature of Practical Problems, I have explored ways to use a body of difficult and esoteric knowledge when defining practical problems in terms of those which are perennial. It is necessary to establish the significance of perennial problems over trival fleeting concerns.

If home economics is concerned with service relevant to certain practical problems of the home and family, it must be recognized that such problems need to be viewed in social perspective. One must determine the meaning or nature of particular problems in order to ascertain factors which influence the individual and the home and in order to examine the consequences of action by family members as well as by professional home economists. Taking a social perspective on problems has clear implications for the subject matter and mode of inquiry in home economics. The third heading, The Social Perspective on Problems, does not deal with these implications—they come later—but it seeks to show that those problems which home economics is to address are set in a social and cultural context.

In clarifying the problem orientation of home economics, the first three headings described above seek to establish the *logical form* of the questions which are addressed in the subject matter of home economics. This point is significant logically and epistemologically for two reasons; 1) it determines what kinds of knowledge—analytic, empirical, value of hybrid combination—are logically relevant to such questions or problems and 2) it determines what mode of inquiry is appropriate in seeking and organizing such knowledge. Effort to clarify the *substantive focus*, i.e., what the questions or problems are about, is done under the last heading, The Substantive Focus of Problems in Home Economics, in Section A of Part III. Under this last heading, I have elaborated upon what has been established about the form of the questions and sought to establish their conceptual limits. Both the form and the substantive focus give identity to home economics.

The second sub-section (B) of Part III is an effort to describe briefly the mode of inquiry appropriate to home economics. With such a brief statement as this paper requires, I am afraid this will have immediate meaning only for readers who have some background in contemporary schools of metascience. For those for whom it is less meaningful, I hope that references cited and supplementary reading suggestions included in the monograph will prove helpful. This section is included because it is an essential part of defining the nature of home economics. With the particular curriculum aim and strategy chosen, the mode of inquiry in home economics also becomes a process of thinking in the classroom. It is considered essential for students in school physics to learn the empirical-analytic mode of physical science as they perform experiments, classify physical phenomena, etc. Similarly, the use of the mode of inquiry which is critical science or policy research is necessary in home economics curricula.

In the third sub-section (C) of Part III, all that has been said thus far in the paper about the nature of

home economics is utilized to formulate and set forth a conceptual structure for home economics. This structure is relevant to curriculum for it shows an outline of the type of organization necessary to interrelate concepts relevant to each practical problem. Concepts are not chosen in isolation, organized randomly or according to some other field of study. The relevance and organization of concepts depends upon the form and substances of the questions or problems with which we deal.

The last sub-section (D) of Part III relates the nature of home economics, as clarified in Part II, to the curriculum content, aim and strategy previously chosen.

Finally, Part IV presents decision-rules for a curriculum. Those presented follow logically from what has been stated previously in Parts II and III of the paper. They do not specify what should be decided; rather, they indicate what decisions need to be made if the curriculum aim and strategy chosen and the outline of home economics presented here are to be implemented in curriculum content.

Marjorie M. Brown, Ph.D.
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St. Paul, Minnesota
April 27, 1977

A CONCEPTUAL SCHEME AND DECISION-RULES FOR THE SELECTION AND ORGANIZATION OF HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM CONTENT

Wisconsin Home Economics Curriculum and Evaluation Project

Introduction

My task, as I understand it, is to develop a conceptual framework for use as a scheme in the selection and organization of content for the Wisconsin home economics curriculum. In performing that task, there are limits which have been placed and directions which have been mandated by other curriculum decisions already made by those engaged in thinking through the curriculum project. In this introductory section, it is appropriate to identify certain of those decisions and to indicate briefly the bearing they have on the conceptual framework and decision-rules I am to develop. It is also appropriate in this section to seek to clarify certain terminology which will have bearing on the definition of my task and how it is to be conducted.

One very basic decision you have made is that curriculum content is to be selected and organized. This may seem rather obvious but it is important becuse there is more than one point of view concerning curriculum which rejects the notion of educators selecting and organizing content. This is, for example, the view of Romantic Naturalism which holds that children are innately wise and, if left alone to choose for themselves, will develop or learn as far as they are capable.[1] This view operates also in curricula based completely on the felt needs of students (as in some needs assessment activities) and student-planned curricula. A very similar view operates in curricula whose proponents identify themselves as Existentialists; the justification by this group is that teacher selection and organization of content places an undesirable rational constraint on students which interferes with individuation and self-actualization, a point made by Greene (1973) and Lamm (1972), among others. You have apparently rejected these views and have decided that curriculum content is to be selected and organized since you have asked me to explore with you decision rules for the selection and organization.

Second, it seems clear, in the way you are going about curriculum development, that we are concerned with microcurricular matters in that the curriculum is to be a resource for home economics teachers and for the subject matter area of home economics. Macrocurricular questions and concerns are devoted to general education or "that part of a student's whole education which looks first of all to his life as a responsible human being and citizen".[2] There is a possibility that the curriculum guide you develop will have usefulness also for a portion of general education and therefore, macrocurricular concerns. At the end of this paper and, especially, in the completion of your curriculum guide, you may wish to consider what implications (if any) there may be for use in schools which approach curriculum planning for general education as a total school.

Still another decision you have made is that the curriculum is to have a "home and family focus" or, somewhat more definitely, be concerned with the "family and its environment." Content, therefore, is to focus upon the conceptual area of the family and on areas of the environment of the family: the home, the culture, the society, and other relevant environmental units. You have also decided that the concepts are to be drawn largely from the social sciences. This decision not only makes the disciplinary source plural with respect to the social sciences but also adds to the plurality of disciplines by recognizing "physical science elements" . . . "studied to determine their impact on the family." These two decisions you have related to the nature of home economics. While the issue of what home economics content to choose for curriculum is not the same issue as what is the nature of home economics, as will be noted below, the latter does have some bearing on the former.

Another set of decisions you have made concern the long-range curriculum aim and the curriculum strategy. These decisions I must take into account for to approach the selection of content for home economics curriculum without consideration of the long-range aim and the curriculum strategy would be to act blindly and unreasonably. There are competing and mutually exclusive curriculum theories with different long-range goals, each theory having a different set of mandates about the content of curriculum. I have tried to use the information provided in the paper, "Wisconsin Home Economics Curriculum and Evaluation: A Concept Paper," August 1976, in order to focus my efforts on principles consistent with your curriculum approach. In this particular paper (pp. 13-14), you have comitted yourselves to the cognitive developmental approach since, as you say, you are concerned with the student's use of what he learns in home economics classes in his decisions and behavior regarding the home and family. Since *how* he uses what he learns is important, it is in keeping with the cognitive developmental approach to curriculum that the aim be for the student to become increasingly critical, creative and morally responsible in using what he knows in decisions and action. (More will be said about this aim later.) With the curriculum aim and strategy you have chosen, you have not only rejected

the romantic notion that students, if left alone, will select for themselves and learn what is important or useful and the notion that selection of content is necessarily and undesirable rational constraint on students; you have also rejected the machine or production model of curriculum with its specific behavioral objectives and concern for students giving the "right responses" of specific information in conforming to external expectations.

Two points regarding terminology may be helpful at this point. First, it is more appropriate in the sections which follow to use the term "curriculum content" rather than "subject matter" since the latter is more constraining in its conceptual meaning. As will become evident in subsequent sections of the paper, the more constraining concept is inconsistent with your curriculum aim and strategy. Secondly, it is important at the outset to distinguish between "content of a curriculum" and "discipline" or "field of study." The disciplines are conceptualized as the established specializations in scholarship common in universities, each specialization having its own boundaries, its own process of disciplined inquiry, its own modes of thought. Examples are anthropology, physics, economics, biology, philosophy, mathematics, art, literature, and the like. There are also applied fields of study in which there is also specialization (in universities) but in which the concern is for professional service in some area of human problems or needs. The service, for which these fields prepare professionals, require application of knowledge to particular cases where individuals or groups have problems or needs. The knowledge applied often comes from a combination of basic disciplines as well as from research or invention within the applied field. Such applied fields or professions include the various engineering fields, medicine and its various specializations, social work, education, and home economics. "Content of curriculum," on the other hand, refers to the substance of what is learned. This substance is not necessarily coextensive with a discipline or field of study even for university students who specialize in a discipline or applied field; there is selectivity and organization. Neither is curriculum content limited to *existing knowledge* in a discipline or applied field even in the subject matter organization of curriculum in elementary, middle and secondary schools. The content can also include *emergent knowledge* in the sense that the student learns a continuous reconstruction of knowledge in light of his life experience. As studies such as those cited in *The Unstudied Curriculum* (Overly, 1970) show, the curriculum also includes such substance as values, feelings, modes and processes of thinking even when such substance is ignored by the teacher. The point is that the boundaries of curriculum content are not coextensive with the boundaries of a discipline or applied field in microcurriculum or with the additive content of various disciplines in macrocurriculum development. Curriculum content is selected and organized according to the philosophic perspective and the curriculum theory of the curriculum developer(s) and user(s).

I have taken one other liberty with terminology which, in discussion with some of you, I have found to be consistent with your intended meaning. Using the full terminology from the beginning may help as a conceptual guide. I have inserted the words "home and" before "family" in what you have identified as the focus of home economics. The reasons for this are complex and their nature becomes clearer (I hope) in the section which deals with a conception of home economics and its implications for curriculum. However, a brief justification is deserved here. To say that the focus of home economics is the family as studied in the social sciences implies some meanings which (a) are contrary to the intellectual tradition of home economics and (b) create difficulty in distinguishing between home economics on the one hand and the social studies (especially sociology and anthropology) on the other. "Home" means something to the individuals who, by choice or by fate, at a point or points live alone and I believe home economics has something to offer these people as well as those who are a group we call "family" however we may define it. Beyond this point, study of persons who have had satisfying family life as a child and/or adult indicate that there is much more meaning attached to that life and its center in the home than thinking of the family merely as a social institution with structure and function.

In the sections which follow, attention is given first to the nature of a conceptual scheme, its uses with respect to justifying curriculum content, and factors influencing the choice of a scheme for selecting and organizing the content of curriculum. This is followed by a section which presents a view of the intellectual orientation of home economics and implications for curriculum. In referring to "the intellectual orientation of home economics," the intent is not to treat this factually in terms of what, in fact, the (prevailing) orientation is. Instead the purpose is to treat it in terms of what it has historically and philosophically been conceptualized to be (or become) as a defensible area of study. The third major section logically follows with a presentation of the proposed scheme for selecting and organizing the content of the home economics curriculum. The final part of the paper summarizes by presenting decision-rules for the selection and organization of content for the "home and family focus" of curriculum which has the long-range aims and curriculum strategy you have chosen.

A Scheme for Selection and Organization of Curriculum Content: Its Nature, Uses, and Choice

The product of the activity in which I am engaged here (along with you) is to be a set of "decision-rules" for the selection of home economics curriculum content in your project. "Decision-rules" is a term you have used to mean "if—then" statements in which the "if" clause pertains to ends you hope to accomplish through the curriculum and the "then" clause refers to what can or should be done in the selection of curriculum content. A decision-rule, then, takes this form:

> If X is to be accomplished, then Y is what can or should be done.

Sometimes the accomplishment of X may take more than one kind of act. That is, it may take doing two or more things in order to accomplish X.

> If X is to be accomplished, then Y and Z (and A and B) can or should be done.

On the other hand, the accomplishment of X may be done through alternative means where we can choose or alternate the means used.

> If X is to be accomplished, then Y or Z can or should be done.

That Y "should be done" is not intended to mean that Y is arbitrarily prescribed to reach X or that it is merely preferred to A or B. It means that Y is instrumental to accomplishing X in the same way we would say "If you wish to prevent tooth decay, then you should get a certain amount of calcium in your diet each day." Presumably, Y is offered as instrumental to accomplishing X because (1) there is evidence that X results from Y as prevention of tooth decay results from getting a certain amount of calcium in the diet or (2) Y is consistent with A and there is evidence that A results in X (drinking a certain amount of milk is consistent with having a certain amount of calcium in the diet *and* having a certain amount of calcium in the diet results in preventing tooth decay).

We cannot afford decision-rules in curriculum design which are arbitrary or which are merely expedient in response to the political and social pressures of the time or to what is fashionable in education. Too much is at stake: critical understanding of the meaning of the decision-rules and of their source and, eventually, the consequences to students and teachers who are involved in the use of the curriculum. In the case of decision-rules for curriculum, unless they have their source and justification in a sound rationale or theory supported by conceptual research, they tend to promote curriculum as nothing more than reaction to crises or whimsical change for the sake of fashion or mere convenience. A rationale is a reasoned set of principles; a theory, as the term is used here, is a conceptual scheme or system of ideas to be followed in doing something. The significant points are that the source and justification of decision-rules for curriculum lie in a conceptual scheme, the factual parts of which are supported by research, and the total is a coherent system or reasoned set of principles. Without coherence we can embrace decision rules which are inconsistent with one another, not even recognizing that we do so. The consequence to curriculum in use then is that our practices in instruction cancel out one another as means of accomplishing the intended aim and objectives. The consequence to students of such inconsistency may be worse than we realize.

The above paragraph has been in reference to decision-rules and their source in a theory or conceptual scheme for curriculum in general. A set of decision-rules for curriculum content can not be reasonably constructed out of context of the total curriculum scheme. To attempt such a thing would result in a mish-mash of ideas and rules for curriculum, some of which would be contradictory. Therefore, some attention will be given in this section to making more detailed and explicit a conceptual scheme for curriculum consistent with decisions you have made about its aim and general strategy. This is necessary in order to clarify and justify decision-rules for selecting curriculum content. First, however, some attention must be given to the nature of a conceptual scheme, with special reference to curriculum, and to the uses of the scheme in curriculum design.

The Nature of a Conceptual Scheme with Special Reference to Curriculum

A scheme is a pattern or system of arrangements. We are familiar with a color scheme, or system of arranging colors. We are also familiar with a residential scheme as a system of arranging houses, lots, and streets in a residential area. An arrangement involves two or more parts being arranged: two or more colors, two or more houses and lots in relation to one or more streets, for example. While we may think of such schemes as being expressed in diagrams (such as marking off a segment of the color wheel) or in maps or three-dimensional models (such as the plot of a residential area), underlying each concrete form of the scheme is a set of ideas about different colors or color values and their relation to one another, about the location of houses in relation to each other and to lots and streets. What is being schematized conceptually sometimes lends itself readily to diagrams, models, maps, and the like. However, the schematic arrangement of the content of books, arguments or patterns of thought about things which are ideational rather than material (so that they cannot be pointed to directly) are not so readily shown in visual patterns. While a visual pattern or diagram may be used, the meaning of

its parts and their relationships cannot be understood without language statements which clarify the nature of the parts and of their interrelationships. A conceptual scheme for curriculum is in this latter category.

One of the characteristics of a conceptual scheme is its generality. A concept is a general notion about a *class* of objects (not necessarily physical objects). For example, a concept of the learner as a mentally active organism in relating to his environment is a general notion about (one aspect of) the class of objects which is the learner. A concept of curriculum as both the planned and the guided (implemented) learning experiences toward intended learning outcomes, under the auspices of the school is a general notion about the class of objects known as curriculum. The point is that concepts are general, or more specifically, they are generalizations about some class of objects rather than the concrete objects themselves. A conceptual scheme, therefore, is also general; it is a system of generalizations about certain interrelated classes of objects. In being general, the conceptual scheme applies to all of the possible relevant specific cases. For example, a conceptual scheme for curriculum applies to all possible specific cases of curriculum. A conceptual scheme for curriculum in home economics applies to all possible specific cases of curriculum in home economics. Schools or teachers having curricula which differ, differ in the underlying conceptual schemes or, as indicated earlier, some curricula may not be deliberately based on any conceptual scheme but be whimsical or mere reaction to fashion or crisis.

A second important characteristic of a conceptual scheme is that it shows the relationship of parts (conceptual categories) to one another. This is what is meant by their systematic nature or by being a reasoned set of principles. Thus, a conceptual scheme is the result of reflective consideration of what classes of objects (which are conceptualized) are to be included because their inclusion is not only relevant but necessary. If a scheme is a system, it has coherence. Not only are relevant classes of objects identified; their relation to one another is conceptualized in some design which is coherent. A conceptual scheme for curriculum must identify what classes of objects to include and these classes of objects (concepts) are related to one another in a coherent pattern.

It is commonly accepted that the design of curriculum includes determining objectives (if having objectives identified by educators is deemed acceptable), content of learning experiences (including both subject matter and processes of learning), and evaluation. The issues, however, are what objectives, what content of learning experiences (subject matter and processes), what kinds of evaluation are to be built into the curriculum. The particular curriculum theory, as rationale, provides the bases for choice of curriculum elements and for their organization. Further, the theory used seeks to assure that the various aspects of curriculum (objectives, content, and evaluation) are internally consistent. For example, if an *objective* is for students to develop critical thinking abilities, then the content of *learning* and the *evaluation practices* used must encourage the development of critical thinking abilities. Thus, the curriculum scheme or theory is not a list of steps in planning curriculum but it is a set of basic beliefs and values which guide the practical choices made. What are these basic beliefs and values about? It is granted that different curriculum theories will include different beliefs and different values but are there certain factors in the educative process about which the relevant beliefs and values center? According to Dewey (1902) these fundamental factors are: (1) the nature of the learner, (2) the nature and conditions of society, and (3) the specializations and divisions of knowledge. Beliefs and values about each of these factors enter into the rationale or theory of curriculum, according to Dewey's analysis, but they do not do so mechanistically by merely adding them together. Dewey (1902) held that these factors must be considered as interacting and that it is the role of philosophy to provide direction to, to provide meaning for, and to criticize choices for curriculum. Philosophy was not considered to be "an external application of ready-made ideas to a system of practice,"[3] but was considered "thinking which has become conscious of itself."[4] Taba (1945) and Tyler (1949) proposed three sources of data in curriculum planning. (1) studies of learners, (2) studies of society, and (3) the specialized subject matter approach. These categories are similar to Dewey's earlier formulation but Taba and Tyler emphasize the empirical aspects of learners and society and do not give an active role to philosophy in interrelating these sets of information; philosophy is only a "screen" through which to "strain" for inconsistencies. What to do, for example, when conditions of society are contrary to the basic nature of the human learner, is not indicated. Neither is there any recognition of the need for philosophic criticism and formulation when subject matter may be geared to a society which no longer exists or when subject matter is dealt with in a way contrary to certain processes of learning.

Various movements to "reform" the curriculum since the early 1950's not only failed to recognize the interaction of the learner, society, and subject matter in the education process and, therefore, the curriculum; they also tended to use only *one* of the factors as the basis for formulating curriculum. Beginning with the concern that students were not learning science and mathematics, the "disciplines-centered" curriculum became the popular panacea for educational ills.[5] Curriculum development based on the "nature of the discipline," the "structure of the discipline," and the "mode of inquiry in the discipline" was led largely by specialists from the various university disciplines in such separate areas as biology, physics, mathematics

and the social sciences. There was concern for knowledge of the discipline for its own sake rather than for its use by students in meeting practical problems. The discipline-centered curriculum was formulated from a rationale which considered only subject matter and ignored the problems of sociey and the nature of the learner. "There is no place in the curriculum for ideas which are regarded as suitable for teaching because of the supposed nature, needs, and interests of the learner, but which do not belong within the regular structure of the disciplines."[8] It was reaction to the ignoring of the learner by the discipline-centered curriculum which was responsible for the hue and cry for a student-centered school. Proponents of this latter movement even rejected subject matter. Holt (1964), for example, wrote: "Since we can't know what knowledge will be most needed in the future, it is senseless to try to teach it in advance."[7] The student was to "do his own thing" regardless of whether the social values underlying "his own thing" were those of the criminal street gang or of a democratic society. All societies and all cultures were rejected for their "repressive influence" on individual development.[6] Further, there was no concern for whether the student viewed himself as responsible for contributing to his own society. The emphasis on personal relativism in values (one person's values are as good as another's) ignored the social problems created when basic value differences are not resolved or when the only way to resolve them is through dominance or power. Some reformists, on the other hand, were concerned for social problems to the extent that they sought to make this single factor the focus of rationale for curriculum.[9] Emphasis was placed on minority interests (e.g., "Black Studies," "Indian Studies"), on the changing society (so the aim of curriculum is to adapt to social change), on manpower needs (increased job-training), on pollution of the environment (environmental studies). While these latter efforts at reform tended to be only administrative changes in response to socio-political forces and crises of the time, they were formulated in considering only one of the factors in the educative process: conditions of society.

Instead of a coherent theory accounting for all of the areas of variables and influence, curriculum in recent years has tended to be based on a partially examined doctrine. Warring groups have emerged, each insistent that its own formulation (accounting only for the learner, or for society, or for subject matter) is the only worthy approach. Dewey (1902a) commented on the tendency to see each of the factors in the educative process "in their separateness, to insist upon one at the expense of the other, to make antagonists of them."[10] The need to consider all sources of curriculum objectives, content, and structure to be adequately systematic is also pointed out by Tanner and Tanner (1975). They point, too, to the learner, to social forces and problems, and to subject matter as factors to be considered in interaction in a curriculum theory and add a fourth: the world of knowledge — its search and application — which is broader than knowledge as conceptualized in a single discipline. The active place of philosophy in examining each of the categories and their interaction is also acknowledged by Tanner and Tanner.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to formulate a full curriculum theory. However, it will be necessary to point out sufficient outlines of a theory which justify the aim and curriculum strategy you have chosen and which would, therefore, give direction to curriculum content. In doing this in these pages, we will not consider everything we know about learners, about society, about subject matter, and about knowledge. We will consider, however, a framework which (1) draws from knowledge about each of these areas and (2) identifies relevant value assumptions. This will be done in a section below concerned with factors influencing the selection and organization of curriculum content. However, a point made earlier about the use of a conceptual scheme as the source and justification of decision-rules for curriculum needs to be made more specific to decision rules for curriculum content. This is the purpose of the section which follows immediately.

Uses of an Explicit Conceptual Scheme in the Selection and Organization of Curriculum Content

What is being argued for here is contrary to what is popular both in American society at large and in large segments of the profession of education. To argue for the use of sound theory and conceptual research as a rationale for practical decisions in educational practice or in dealing with social problems is to walk against a strong wind — sometimes of gale force. People, including some curriculum makers, are often impatient with anything other than immediate answers. That some questions and concerns have to be thought about, diverse areas of conceptual research brought to bear, and underlying assumptions of alternatives examined in order to arrive at an intelligent guide to action is contrary to the mentality which reduces everything to the status of instant coffee, instant entertainment, instant heat, and instant sleep-inducers. Problems of education, such as those of concern in curriculum, are very complex and yet there is often a tendency to seek easy and instant solutions. Sources of this anti-intellectual bias are undoubtedly numerous but my own field of teacher education in colleges and universities must assume part of the blame. There is a common tendency to offer prescriptive techniques for curriculum, for teaching, and for evaluation so that teachers, through their professional preparation, are taught to expect immediate answers. (One bright teacher recently commented that she had received the answers but she didn't know what the questions were!)

My attraction to the work being done in the Wisconsin home economics curriculum project is your concern for a sound rationale. I have been most favorably impressed with those of you with whom I have had contact in *your desire* and *your ability* to examine the conceptual bases of your undertaking. You are to be commended for it is exceptionally rare in a day when we accept and discard fashions in education as readily (and apparently with the same justification) as fashions in dress. The points made here about the users of a conceptual scheme in selecting and organizing curriculum content are not likely to be necessary. However, I include them because they provide a context in which to view the categories of decision-rules with which we will be concerned later. Three uses of a conceptual scheme for curriculum in the selection and organization of curriculum content will be presented and illustrated. These are: (1) determining what function subject matter has in the curriculum, (2) defining the nature of curriculum content, and (3) giving direction to the focus and organization of content.

Determining the function of subject matter. First, the particular conceptual scheme we formulate and apply critically will shed light on the function which subject matter is to have in the curriculum. For example, earlier reference was made to the discipline-centered curriculum which has as its rationale the "knowledge which comes from the disciplines."[11] If we adopted this rationale, then subject matter of home economics is central to the curriculum or, in the extreme view of Phenix cited above, subject matter *is* the curriculum. On the other hand, if we adopted the rationale of the student-centered school, subject matter would be incidental in function if it is to be considered at all. The rationale holds that learning which follows the felt needs and interests of the child, as related only to his "here-and-now" experience, is a way of allowing the child to unfold to his natural goodness; the imposition of an adult world, including subject matter, is an evil which interferes with that natural development. While substance is learned by the child, it is incidental in his right to "play and play and play" and to recognize for himself what is good.[12] Or, if we should choose a rationale (which we will explore in the next section) which leads us to establishing a curriculum aim such as having students use what they learn in home economics in critical, creative, and morally responsible ways, then subject matter has a different role. It functions as a tool or a source of power for the student in the development of his capacities for thought and action. Subject matter is not the *only* tool in the curriculum and it is not central to curriculum but neither is it incidental, as we shall see.

I have been speaking of "subject matter" in the foregoing remarks and, yet, earlier I commented on the use of a broader term "curriculum content." Because "subject matter" is one of the factors considered (even when it is rejected) in developing a curriculum rationale and because we are familiar with its consideration, I began here. However, it is important to recognize that how curriculum content is viewed also stems from the conceptual scheme we hold as a rationale. It is to views of curriculum content that we turn now in examining uses of a conceptual scheme.

Defining the nature of curriculum content. Often curriculum content is viewed as subject matter defined as the body of established truths given by scholars who have gone before. Thus it is a recorded set of statements for retrieval from books, documents, libraries, or other sources. So viewed, it is inert and relatively unchanging except by addition when new scholars add new truths. It tends to be compartmentalized within the boundaries of the respective subject areas or disciplines. Such a view comes from certain perspectives regarding the learner (or man as knower, in general), knowledge, and society. The learner as knower is mentally passive in that his experience in the classroom is one of *absorbing* "the material" and his life experience outside the classroom is irrelevant to the knowledge he must acquire. His own thought processes are controlled and limited by the subject matter as a given not to be questioned as to source or truth. As a learner, he is not recognized as a full member of society until he demonstrates sufficient storage and personal retrieval of subject matter. Knowledge is viewed apart from the processes of inquiry by which it came to be. It is also viewed as a finality instead of a resource for further inquiry, a base for generating other knowledge. Thus, processes and ways of knowing are separated from the body of knowledge known as subject matter; knowledge is something that somehow exists "out there." Knowledge is not only independent of thought processes; it is completely rational and its acquisition a matter of cognitive intellect separated from the attitudes, interests, and values of those who seek to know. This view is reflected in the curriculum which separates "content" from "modes of learning" or instructional processes, i.e., which does not consider the thought processes (cognitive and affective) by which the student (or any one else) becomes knowledgeable or by which he uses what he knows in everyday life. Society is viewed as basically unchanging except in accretion of knowledge and technological additions or replacements. Separated from the processes of questioning and evaluating, conditions in society are considered acceptable as they are and "things as they are" becomes the same as "things as they should be." With such a view of society and with subject matter viewed as an accumulation of the culture, the transmission of the existing cultural and social assumptions is the aim of the curriculum. Society is highly specialized and therefore, knowledge of a highly specialized nature is required of its citizens.

However, curriculum content may be viewed as more than established subject matter within the discipline. From a different conceptual scheme drawn from knowledge and views of the learner, of knowledge, and

of society, curriculum content is viewed as an interplay between processes of thinking and the substance of thought. That is, thinking is an active process but thinking is *about* something; similarly, to acquire or entertain meaningful ideas about something requires the use of active thought processes. Just as some beliefs are more acceptable as truths in subject matter, some modes of thinking are better than others. Or, perhaps we should say that some beliefs in subject matter are more acceptable than others *because* they are the products of better ways of thinking. Further, modes of thinking are learned and are as much the substance of learning as subject matter. They become, therefore, a deliberate part of the content of curriculum in two ways: (1) in selecting instructional modes which will encourage development of the ways of thinking which are desirable and (2) in deliberate examination of processes and standards of thinking. The first can be illustrated by use of the two taxonomies of educational objectives (Bloom, *et. al.*, 1956; Krathwohl, *et. al.*, 1964) in instruction and evaluation. For example, students' use of the process of analysis, (in the cognitive domain) is a more complex thought process in a learning task and one leading to more independent and criticial thinking than is merely committing to memory a set of verbal statements. Students' drawing a generalization from data or developing a valid argument for a position encourages more autonomous thinking than being expected to accept a generalization or an argument ready-made. The second way modes of thinking are learned can be illustrated by classroom examination of the process of generalizing from data and of the standards for a reliable generalization, by learning the meaning and the process of making a value judgment, and by learning to plan experiments to test hypotheses. Learning by use of thought processes which encourage more complex, more autonomous, more reliable, and more socially responsible thought (as illustrated in the first group above) is held to be more successful when the student also learns to examine the process he is using (as in the second group of examples). This view of content comes from a conception of the learner as mentally active and growing both in his abilities to use complex thought and in his interpersonal maturity. Learning is viewed as necessarily relating growth in modes of thought with growth in modes of relating to other persons, i.e., growth in abilities to use complex thought depends upon growth in interpersonal maturity and *vice versa*. Instructional processes (as curriculum content) are based upon a holistic conception of the student as a person and are drawn from theories and research in cognitive development.[13] Society and the larger environment of the learner are conceptualized as changing but the change is directed by human conceptualization and action. There is an organismic relationship between man as learner and uses of what he learns and the qualities of his social environment. Society is viewed as mission-oriented rather than concerned about knowledge for its own sake. "Its (society's) mission is resolution of problems arising from social, technical, and psychological conflicts and pressures."[14] This view recognizes that a society does not always have desirable norms and practices. "Every society gets encumbered with what is trivial . . . with what is positively perverse."[15] Knowledge is not considered to be mere information or inert ideas nor is it merely a commodity to exchange for economic goods, wages or salary. It is a working intellectual and emotional tool which conceptualizes, organizes into complex patterns, generates alternatives for consideration in concrete everyday situations, transforms what is learned into new insights and new solutions to problems.

Giving direction to the focus and organization of content. In the illustrations above, it may be seen that in the process of formulating a rationale for curriculum, there are different idealized conceptions of the learner as a human being. There are also different conceptions of society and of the learner's relation to it as well as different idealized conceptions of subject matter and of knowledge. Since a rationale is a reasoned set of principles and, therefore, presumably internally consistent, a particular conception of the learner is in accord with a particular conception of society, of knowledge and subject matter. From the interrelation of these conceptions, an aim of education emerges together with a generalized conception of instruction as means to accomplish that aim. Three groupings are presented briefly below in Table 1 to show the internal consistency within each rationale and the differences in perspective among the rationales. While there may be more than three perspectives, the ones presented have been common in American education for several decades and dominate the scene today. It is to be remembered that these conceptions include values as well as knowledge. It may also be pointed out that some of the conceptions are more implicit than they are explicitly formulated by the people who subscribe to a particular rationale. The reason for this may well be that those subscribing to one rationale are less likely to engage in philosophic examination of beliefs about curriculum for underlying assumptions.

Table 1. Grouping of Conceptions for Synoptic View of Curriculum Rationales

	Perspective A	Perspective B	Perspective C
conception of the learner	Ideally, the learner is rationally in command of certain facts and skills necessary to meet expectations of the society.	Ideally, the learner is an independently critical and creative thinker, morally responsible as a member of society, and an organism in continuity with nature.	Ideally, the learner is an "unfolding flower" developing his own uniquely individual qualities.
	He learns most favorably by conditioning with rewards and punishments.	His ways of learning change as he grows in maturity but these ways consistently involve his own purpose and his own active thought processes.	He is innately wise and good.
	Because of his nature, the learner must have others determine for him what he is to learn.	There are qualitative differences in the thought processes common to persons who are at different stages of development, e.g., young children are not reflective thinkers nor are they capable of full self-direction in learning.	Growth occurs through the inner forces and innate abilities of the person although external factors assist in the process.
	Learning proceeds best when it is focussed on small units programmed step by step.	Growth occurs through the person's interaction with appropriate conditions in his environment.	There is great diversity among persons as the result of human evolution.
	* Human beings are passive and do only that which they are required to do.	Meaning is a necessary aspect of learning as is organization of meanings.	This diversity is necessary for the actualization of the person and for the survival of the human race rather than molding or structuring of personality.
	* The only motives humans have in learning are those of seeking personal reward from others or avoidance of punishment by others	Human beings are active and capable of transforming their environment (or society) as well as being influenced by it.	Any predetermined model for man (or the learner) is a totalitarian or godlike assumption.
	* Human beings are machinelike in their functioning with a separation of cognitive and affective processes.	There is an interaction of cognitive and affective processes in thought and in thought culminating in action (the practical).	Creativity is a mode of life and is an act of liberation from the culture and from society.
		While there are unique qualities of the individual, there are common essential qualities of human nature.	Meaning is essential and is purely subjective, unencumbered by the rationalism of science and existing knowledge.
			Learning consists of becoming aware of the self.
			Learning best occurs through self-regulation according to one's own felt needs and interests.

Table 1. Grouping of Conceptions for Synoptic View of Curriculum Rationales (continued)

	Perspective A	Perspective B	Perspective C
conception of society	Society and social conditions should be accepted and protected as they are. Existing norms and conventions of the culture should be adopted as the values by which to live. Present society is highly industrialized and economically and politically oriented toward industry; the norms of an economic-industrial-political society are to be fostered. The significant aspects of contemporary life consist of specifiable tasks or jobs which are socially expected. * It is the business of society to control its members intellectually as well as politically and socially. * Economic and political issues are the same as moral issues or, at least, they supercede moral issues. Society is highly specialized and this specialization is what is required to maintain the economic and industrial system we have.	Social conditions and norms are not necessarily sound or unsound for human existence (i.e., they must be evaluated for significance vs. triviality and for constructiveness vs. perversity). The standards and conditions of society are created by its human members and can, through joint effort, be improved. Individuals necessarily draw from the society and culture and are influenced by them; therefore, the society needs to be intellectually and morally enlightened. Members of society have responsibility to contribute intellectually and morally to the creation and protection of a free, democratic society. A free society looks to education as a key to social improvement. Society is mission- or problem-oriented (i.e. concerned with the solution of problems).	All societies and all cultures seek to socialize or encuiturate their members thereby interfering with the individuation of the person. Therefore, all societies and all cultures are to be rejected. The rationalism of Western society is contrary to the subjectivity of knowing and is, therefore, to be rejected. Society should provide a richness of stimuli and a pluralism of alternatives for personal self-selection.

* Conceptions which may not be explicitly formulated but are implicit in the remainder of the conceptualization.

Table 1. Grouping of Conceptions for Synoptic View of Curriculum Rationales (continued)

	Perspective A	Perspective B	Perspective C
conception of subject matter and knowledge	Subject matter consists of the accretion of specific information. Knowledge consists of information which is in existence as the results of the work of previous scholars and is separate from the life experience of learners. It is organized within the boundaries of each of the disciplines or fields of study. Knowing consists of the mastery of a set of statements (knowing that) and of a set of skills (knowing how). Knowing is separated from feelings such as interests and attitudes and from values. Knowledge is a commodity which can be exchanged for certain benefits. That knowledge is of most value which brings the highest benefits (prestige, status, economic or political power, or expedient utility).	Knowledge consists of both substance and processes of knowing, i.e., both what is known (subject matter) and how it is known (method or learning process). Knowing requires active thought processes on the part of the knower. There is a personal element in all knowing but there are rational processes and standards for justification or validation. The thought processes in which knowing occurs are inter-dependent with emotions and values. Knowledge is dynamic in that established knowledge is continuously reconstructed by the knower. Subject matter and life experience are continuous with one another. Intelligent action is not separated from the thought processes of knowing. To be working power, knowledge must be integrated by the knower. There is more than one way of systematizing or organizing knowledge dependent on its use in life situations. Knowledge is working power in practical life (i.e. action): in analyzing life situations, in criticizing, in creating new insights, in solving problems. Values, both intellectual and moral, are an extension of knowing and, therefore, value claims are justifiable as objective claims of goodness.	Each person is his own judge of what is true, i.e., all knowledge is subjective. There are two modes of knowing: (1) Knowing out of perceptual consciousness of the environment and (2) Knowing by internal subjective awareness of one's own perceptual consciousness of the environment. No knowing can occur until there is the second (2) kind of knowing. Therefore, knowledge is private and intuitive and its validity can only be attested subjectively. Knowledge is a means in the process of actualizing unique personality and crystallizing unique identity of the knower. Since persons who seek to know are different from one another, opportunities for self-actualization are provided in different areas of knowledge. The individual must be the chooser of what knowledge is important to him. The characteristic rationalistic modes of thinking in the sciences, mathematics, and history, interfere with the uniqueness and diversity needed for self-actualization.

Table 1. Grouping of Conceptions for Synopic View of Curriculum Rationales (continued)

	Perspective A	**Perspective B**	**Perspective C**
conception of the controlling aim of education	Mastery of subject matter and specific skills within the subject matter.	Ability to use what is learned in autonomous critical thinking, problem-solving, and action in a democratic society	Finding the meaning of one's own existence and the development of one's own potentials.
conception of generalized method in education	Directive teaching and receptive learning with emphasis on subject matter (not on reflective thought processes) together with teacher determination of what is to be learned and how it is to be learned. Teacher-administered rewards and punishments.	Critical analysis, problem-solving, and democratic social processes with the degree of direction by the teacher decreasing with the developmental maturing of the student.	*Laissez-faire*, non-directed learning environment for examining own feelings, thoughts and for self-expression.

It may be seen from the synoptic view in Table 1 that general guiding principles for curriculum content are contained in the curriculum rationale. These directing principles concern the focus and organization of both the subject matter and process as content and are reflected especially in conceptualization of subject matter and knowledge and in the generalized method. For example, the focus of content in Prespective B is on both cognitive and affective processes, on both knowledge and values, on both established knowledge and emergent knowledge, on life experience, on thought and action (i.e., the practical). The organization of content in Perspective B is around analyzing life situations, solving social problems, generating and criticizing alternative actions, the making of value judgments. Since most life situations are not uni-disciplinary in their conceptual focus nor are social problems, the focus of substance and processes concerned cuts across disciplines. For example, problems of nutrition throughout the world are not merely matters of following (or failing to follow) the Basic Four Food Guide. There are cultural factors of custom and norm, economic factors of poverty and distribution (including waste), psychological factors of frustration and alienation, agricultural factors related to supply, political factors involved in trade and controls, moral factors in greed or in caring about the needs of others, among others.

Factors Influencing the Selection and Organization of Content

From the analyses and examples above, it is now probably obvious as to the factors influencing the selection and organization of curriculum content. This section is included simply to make explicit what those factors are and to provide transition to remaining parts of the paper.

In the search for a rationale for designing curriculum, it is necessary to give consideration to the various elements in the educative process: the human learner, the society of which the learner is a member, the nature of knowledge. Basic beliefs and values about each of these elements in the educative process are examined philosophically but, rather than separately, in systematic relation to each other. (It may be asked why the teacher and the school are not included as elements in this process. They are considered facilitators of the beliefs and values regarding each of the elements rather than additional elements in themselves.) Thus, to begin with, the perspective we bring regarding the constituents in the educative process provide general guides to all of curriculum design including the selection and organization of content. The central educational aim and generalized method or strategy (which emerge from the systematic relating of beliefs and values about the elements involved in the process of education) also give further direction to the content of curriculum.

The directions received from the perspective determined to be most justifiable become a set of value statements guiding the practical action of designing curriculum. For example, if Perspective B is judged to be most justifiable, then there are guiding values such as:

- The curriculum should enable students to use what is learned in autonomous critical thinking, problem-solving and action in a democratic society.
- The curriculum content should focus on complex thought processes as well as established subject matter.
- The curriculum should be designed to recognize the interaction of cognitive and affective thought proceses and substantive content.
- The curriculum should be designed to enable students to interrelate out-of-school life experience and school experience (and the direction of relating should go both ways).

These four are illustrative; it is possible to go through content of the perspective and identify many others. The point is that curriculum design, in its choice of decision-rules, is value-oriented. This is true because one conception of the learner is judged as more desirable than another, one conception of the relations between the individual and society is better than another, and so on. That such value decisions are capable of being made with objective justjification and with validity is a point which there is not time to consider in this paper. Part of the confusion in this area of value justification we have inherited from the social sciences which, until recently anyway, have been dominated by logical empiricism which reduces all values to relativism on the assumption that a person's values are nothing more than the result of socialization or enculturation.[8] With this assumption, values are nothing more than the norms of the society or the culture and since norms differ from one culture to another, one set of values is as good as another. Part of the confusion comes also from a muddleheadedness in which we have been exposed to a mixture of different philosophic perspectives on values (some of which were long ago philosophically rejected) and without adequate examination, have accepted contradictions in our beliefs about values.[7] While he was writing of evaluators, a comment by Steinmetz (1975) is equally appropriate for curriculum designers: "(they) must consider it as part of their essential responsibility to *exhibit* the values involved as well as their role as fundamental assumptions shaping action, and so sharpen for public discussion and choice the full way of life that a particular mode of educational practice represents."[8]

What has been examined concerning a conceptual scheme for curriculum thus far is sufficiently general that it would apply to curriculum design in any subject area of the school or even to macrocurriculum design. Since we are concerned here with home economics curriculum, one factor in the educative process

which needs to be considered in greater detail is the subject matter or division of knowledge which is home economics. This is done in the next major section of the paper since it is the area which you especially requested to have examined. As pointed out earlier, however, the issue of selecting and organizing content for curriculum is not the same issue as the nature of the special field. Since my task was to develop a conceptual framework for use in the selection and organization of curriculum content, it has been necessary to look at the whole of the framework for curriculum of which the specialized subject matter is only part.

The central aim of the home economics curriculum becomes more specific, not in changing the behavioral aspect of a central educational aim, but in attaching a conceptual focus to that behavior. Perspective regarding the subject matter and knowledge elements of the educative process becomes more focussed and specific when considering the particular division of subject matter in microcurriculum.

Home Economics: Its Nature and Implications for School Curriculum Content

To become self-conscious as a home economist about the nature of home economics is to bring the level of self-awareness the assumptions underlying our professional activities. There *are* certain assumptions underlying the organized subject matter called "home economics", the research conducted (both in methodology and in interpretation of findings), the professional uses of the subject matter (including school curricula), and the research undertaking. As backgrund assumptions they receive what Polanyi has called "subsidiary attention"[19] and they operate, as Gouldner has said, as "silent partners"[20] in the professional enterprise. When this point is raised with home economists in the interest of examining those assumptions, there are, in general, three types of reactions. One is to reject the identification and the examination of the assumptions on the grounds that operating as a home economist does not logically require moving from assumptions to professional activity; furthermore, devoting attention to the background assumptions is an intellectually esoteric but useless exercise. On the other hand, there are those who see value in making the underlying assumptions explicit. Among these is a group who accept with minimal reflection and criticism the assumptions on which they personally operate or those which others identify. A third group consists of those who hold that the underlying assumptions must continuously be examined and criticized for the sake of having a home economics which is intellectually and morally justifiable. This last group is prone to argue that whether or not logic requires that we move from assumptions to professional activities, including knowledge-producing and knowledge-disseminating activities, we *do* function with background assumptions; to understand home economics intelligently and to encourage its intellectual and social maturation, its background assumptions must be made explicit and open to public discussion within the field. Thus, logic may not require it but intellectual and moral integrity do require functioning as a profession and field of study on the basis of some clearly formulated and consciously examined assumptions which serve as rationale.

It is the third position which is taken here and which you have taken in asking me to write this paper. In this section of the paper, I will try to formulate what I view as a defensible set of background assumptions for home economics. Unfortunately, the time allowed and the space of one paper will not permit full explication in the statement of the assumptions and their interrelationship. What follows are my own formulations although, obviously, I am indebted to many people including the leaders of the early Lake Placid Conferences. I do not claim that the assumptions set forth here are in fact the present underlying assumptions of home economics for I do not believe there is a set of assumptions commonly held in home economics or even, in many instances, any set of assumptions consciously identified. In setting forth my assumptions about the nature of home economics, I do not do so in a spirit of arbitrariness. If conditions permitted, the critical examination of all varieties of assumptions, including conflicting ones, which have existed historically would be highly desirable. Brevity here may contribute to apparent arbitrariness in the set of beliefs and values stated. The intent is to set them forth as a step in submitting to further examination (including my own) through reason and the use of evidence.

Before beginning a statement of the background assumptions, it is appropriate to indicate the nature of such assumptions. Understanding some ways of classifying the assumptions makes their examination and their relation to actual practice somewhat clearer. The background assumptions of home economics vary in (1) scope and (2) the kind of truth claim which is made.

With respect to the scope of assumptions, there are three different levels of generality or circumference. First, smallest in circumference, there are assumptions which are particular to the field, e.g., concerning its purpose, its substantive focus, its knowledge base, its methodology in inquiry. In well-established fields these assumptions are often so taken for granted (because they have been agreed upon and long followed)

that they are seldom discussed. That they are not clearly differentiated or agreed upon in home economics is evidenced in the number of times in our history we have sought to clarify these assumptions and yet, each time, have come away feeling a lack of fulfillment of the task. A more general level of assumptions is shared with other disciplines or fields of study concerned with human individuals and groups. These assumptions concern the nature of man, the nature of society, the relation between man and society, and how we can know anything about man and society. Examples of this type were included in parts of Table 1 where different assumptions about man and society were reflected in different curriculum rationales. Assumptions of the greatest circumference concern a world view. They are answers to such questions as: What is the nature of all reality? Is a scientific world view adequate to explain all phenomena? How did the world come to be? In this paper emphasis will be on the first category of assumptions and, since the justification and organization of the first assumptions rests in the second, also the more general assumptions about man and society.

Assumptions vary in the type of truth claim which is made. Some are beliefs which are factual of existential in that they are about certain things as they exist. These are drawn from experience, both personal and the special experience of investigative inquiry done by others as well as by ourselves. The assumption that the culture affects lives within families and the assumption that social forces can be directed to serve human interests rather than damage them are examples. Some assumptions are value claims. They are not merely personal or dispositional claims of an individual (e.g., "I value . . .") nor are they merely emotional reactions; they are real-value claims in that they are general assertions that something is *objectively* good or right in that it is *objectively* defensible (not arbitrary or merely personal) and grounded in reasons open to examination.[21] For example, real-value claims are made in "The family has an obligation to promote moral development in children," "This conceptualization of the purpose of home economics is better than that," and "A society should protect and promote the human rights of all its members." While existential assumptions and value assumptions may be analytically separated and examined, they are closely intertwined in the background assumptions of a field of study. Value assumptions give direction to what is worthy to know in a field, what knowledge claims are acceptable, and how to practice one's discipline or profession. In turn, existential assumptions provide conceptual clarity and, therefore, direction in knowing; they also combine with value assumptions in making value judgments, e.g., about what specific conditions to prevent certain human problems are to be fostered and about what actions are acceptable as solutions to those problems.

In formulating the assumptions underlying home economics and presenting them here, the major portion of the presentation will not sort out the assumptions in the categories outlined above because this interferes with the line of reasoning.

Something should be said about the history of assumptions underlying home economics. From a diversity of professional and intellectual interests and from a range in amounts of formal education, home economics in the United States was conceptualized as a "movement", a profession, and a field of study. This diversity served as a social and intellectual influence on the conceptualization of the field and on the nature of its practice. It is to be expected that there were different interpretations brought to bear, as is evident in the Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, 1899-1908. As a consequence, the highly abstract concepts brought out in those conferences were not explicated so that they remained vague and ambiguous in use. Nor were the concepts coherently organized into a framework to give clear meaning to the nature of problems which were of concern, to the nature of professional practice, or to the nature of knowledge needed for that practice. While all of these things may well have been in the minds of many such as Ellen H. Richards, they do not appear in any of the literature. Richards pointed out this lack in the *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Conference.* The unclear conceptual formulation in the late nineteenth century, together with the concurrent pressure from utilitarian interest groups seeking to be associated with home economics, led to expedience and limited scholarly effort as expansion in colleges and universities was sought and achieved. Yet there are *hints* in the early literature as well as in later publications of the intellectual direction which should be taken; these are drawn upon for the formulation here. In presenting below the immediate and more general background assumptions, some documentation will be cited but this is limited. Any one well versed in the literature would be able to add other references to the few I cite and to supply some where I have omitted any. There are also contradictions in intellectual orientation in the literature and in reality. These should be recognized but doing so is beyond the purpose and time allowance of my task.

The Problem Orientation of Home Economics

Home economics is a problem-oriented field in that the nature of both its professional service and its knowledge base is generated by concern with an area of human problems. "Problem" is used to mean a difficult question for thought or inquiry. It is sometimes said that fields of study cannot always be identified by their subject matter but that they can be distinguished by their questions or problems. In this section the intent is to identify the nature of those problems and their conceptual focus. In identifying the nature

of the problems, attention will be given to their being practical rather than theoretic, and perennial rather than fleeting or immediate, and to their social perspective. The substantive focus of the problems is presented in an attempt both to delimit the area of human problems with which home economics deals and to clarify the substantive categories of concepts which are relevant.

The concern for practical problems. The problems with which home economics is concerned are *practical problems* of the home and family. Concern for such problems is indicated, e.g., in Richards' Creed of "What Home Economics Stands For": "utilization of science, to improve the home life," freeing of "the spirit for the . . . important and permanent interests of the home and society."[22] It is reflected also in various statements of the object of the American Home Economics Association through the 1953 statement which indicates the purpose to be "the attainment of the well-being of individuals and of families, the improvement of homes, and the preservation of values significant in home life."[23] To be concerned as members of a profession with service which improves home life and which attains the well-being of individuals in those homes assumes that desirable conditions in homes and families do not automatically or necessarily occur; there are decisions to be made and actions to be taken in order to promote those conditions. It was Henrietta Goodrich who spoke of the "conscious social test and standard of the home" in relation to "industrial conditions and social ideals that prevail." In reference to people making this "conscious social test and standard" in the examination of conditions and ethical standards, she said:

> **Let them distinguish for themselves those things that are vital to the home ideal from those that are merely superficial, traditional, accidental, and they will be willing to sacrifice the latter, if need be, and will demand as their desire and their right a fuller expression of the former. (Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Conference, 1902, pp. 36-37)**

It is in decision-making and action relative to the home and family within families and in society at large on behalf of the home and family that the practical problems are defined. The nature of such problems needs clarification here; the substantive focus of these problems will be dealt with in a later section.

A practical problem is concerned with *what to do*, i.e., with action in situations for which reflective decision-making is required since no automatic or habitual response will suffice. According to Husserl, the practical (coming from "praktisch") pertains to those conscious thought processes which reach fulfillment in behavior.[24] It is also in this sense the Existentialism builds upon the theme of the centrality of human choice to human existence.[25] Kant's earlier work was influential in establishing the significance of practical reason as reflective thought concerned with voluntary decison and action.[26] Since voluntary decision and action have human consequences, practical reason deals with the problems of ethics. It is in the United States that *one* meaning of the English word "practical" in ordinary language has come to be that of immediate or expedient utility. This is *not* the usage in this paper but it may be one which has influenced the existing intellectual orientation of home economics. In interpreting the meaning of "action," as Dewey indicated,[27] its scope "cannot be restricted to self-seeking acts, nor to those of a prudential aspect, nor in general to things of expediency and what are often termed 'utilitarian' affairs." (p. 33)

Practical problems differ from theoretic problems in that the former are concerned with action based on thought and the latter only with thought. Dewey's comments in comparing and relating the two in the *Quest for Certainty* are useful:

> **That man has two modes, two dimensions, of belief, cannot be doubted. He has beliefs about actual existences and the course of events, and he has beliefs about ends to be striven for, policies to be adopted, goods to be attained and evils to be averted. The most urgent of all practical problems concerns the connection the subject-matter of these two kinds of beliefs sustain to each other. How shall our most authentic and dependable cognitive beliefs be used to regulare our practical beliefs? How shall the latter serve to organize and integrate our intellectual beliefs?**
>
> **There is a genuine possibility that the true problem of philosophy is connected with precisely this type of question. Man has beliefs which scientific inquiry vouchsafes, beliefs about the actual structure and processes of things; and he also has beliefs about the values which should regulate his conduct. The question of how these two ways of believing may most effectively and fruitfully interact with one another is the most general and significant of all the problems which life presents to us. Some reasoned discipline, one obviously other than any science, should deal with this issue. Thus there is supplied one way of conceiving of the function of philosophy. (pp. 21-22)**

It is in this light that a portion of the definition of home economics cited in the *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Conference* (1902) takes on meaning:

> **In forming a complete defintion . . ., it may be possible to consider home economics as a philosophical subject, i.e., a study of *relation,* while the subjects on which it depends, i.e., economics, sociology, chemistry, hygiene and others, are empirical in their nature and concerned with *events* and *phenomena.* (pp. 70-71)**

The "study of *relation*" in home economics concerns the connection of values which regulate action or conduct regarding the home and family and knowledge from scientific inquiry.

The significance of practical problems as compared with theoretic problems in some contemporary groups is a question of status, especially in academic circles.

However, personally secure and intellectually mature members of an academic field do not justify decisions about a discipline or profession on the irrational basis of status or, as is often true, on uninformed conceptualization. In *The Quest for Certainty*, Dewey pointed out other causes, both historical and psychological in origin, contributing to a distinct separation between the practical as concerned with action and the theoretic as concerned only for thought and to the favor often accorded the latter. However, as he indicated:

> **The maintenance and diffusion of intellectual values, of moral excellencies, the esthetically admirable, as well as the maintenance of order and decorum in human relations are dependent upon what men do.**
>
> **We should regard practice as the only means (other than accident) by which whatever is judged to be honorable, admirable, approvable can be kept in concrete experienceable existence. In this connection the entire import of "morals" would be transformed. (pp. 33 and 34)**

Kant, earlier, in the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), held that reason is not limited to its theoretical use but extends also to will and feeling. In moral experience (action), the will of a rational person is autonomous. However, the will is really free when we are subject to the laws of nature and of reason and are bound only by the self-imposed practical imperative: "So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only." Practical reason contains beliefs, according to Kant, which are not theoretically or scientifically demonstrable and these beliefs, which we are calling "values," together with those which are scientifically demonstrable, form the basis of reasoning in what we freely decide and do. Kant's argument regarding the nature and significance of practical reason is reflected in the later thought at the 1902 Lake Placid Conference on Home Economics and in Dewey's *Quest for Certainty*.

Practical problems are particular problems in particular situations, i.e., they deal with unique and individualized situations which are seldom, if ever, exactly alike. This point is important because it makes clear that there are no ready-made or cookbook solutions. It also makes clear that acting from habit, custom, or tradition as well as acting without adequate reflection in the making of value judgments are not appropriately intelligent ways to deal with such problems. However, recognizing the individual nature of such problem situations also frequently leads to erroneous thinking in two ways: (1) defining problems in such immediate and concrete terms that there is little or no use of any generalized knowledge in their clarification and in their solution and (2) assuming that all values used in decision-making and action are relative to the person or to the culture. The first error will be dealt with in a section below on the perennial nature of the problems with which home economics deals. Full treatment of the second error is not possible but a few remarks will be made and references to more adequate treatment cited.

In assuming that the values used in judging (deciding) what to do are relative to the person making the judgment confuses values held as conceptualized principles with specific value judgments arrived at as conclusions of the decision-making process. It also confuses the position of emotivism and the position of cognitivism with respect to values, the former being in direct contradiction to the possibility of rational, knowledgeable decision-making. Values are generalizations, i.e., they are general value-claims which hold that some principle (such as equal consideration or beneficence or justice or respect for human dignity) is a good or a right which should prevail.[28] Values are held by individuals and they are brought to the decision-making process for use in reasoning just as any factual generalization may be brought to the process (although value-generalizations and factual generalizations have different functions in the process).[29] That the individual must out of integrity use his own values is obvious for he is committed to no others which he understands. But using his own values in making decisions and in acting upon them nearly always has consequences to others. Therefore, freedom in the use of one's own values is not absolute; freedom carries with it obligations.[30] (It is only the infantile, whether due to youth or delayed immaturity, who have no obligations.) These obligations include the subjection of one's values to tests of moral legitimacy and the conduct of one's value-judgment (decision-making) process as openly and intelligently as possible. Thus, decision-making, while it is personal, must also be conducted socially and openly.

The currently popular notion that values and value judgments can not be rationally examined is part of what Crane Brinton has labeled "contemporary anti-intellectualism".[31] The notion has resulted from lack of sophisticated study in the area, from an emotivist conception of values reflected in preoccupation with "scientism" and the once-dominant logical empiricist view of social science. The emotivist's view of values is that they have no rational grounds and that they have their basis only in emotion. Thus, values have no cognitive content by this view and they are nothing more than the emotive reaction of the person out of his personal here and now feelings. The individual merely *assigns* value to something; he makes no *judgment of its worth*. The particular value he assigns is what he has been enculturated to assign in certain types of situations when certain feelings arise: he can not, presumably, rationally assess the norms of his culture. This view is rejected by those who hold a different conception of man, i.e., man as having emotions which interact with his intellect. In this view, there is no dualism between value and cognition, between feeling and thought. While some people may function emotively in value situations, it is desirable that they learn not to do so because of the consequences of irrational, prejudicial, and erroneous thought and action on

themselves and others. Further, the process of developmental maturing (not to be confused with mere maturation) makes it clear that it is not necessary that they do so.[32] The cognitivist view of values holds that values and value judgments have cognitive content in that (1) they are acquired by reflection about one's experience and (2) they have rational grounds, i.e., reasons which make their claim objective rather than prejudicial.[33]

The emotivist view of values has been encouraged by scientism. Scientism (or scientificism) assumes a world view that science is adequate for complete understanding of the world and to solve all the problems of man. It is, as Vivas[34] has pointed out, a "propagandistic fervor . . ., the unempirical faith that science can give us a complete philosophy for all our human needs." (p. 19) Not all people have been of the persuasion that science is sufficient as a methodology for all knowing and all action but some in our own ranks (and elsewhere) have been so persuaded. I have heard a great many home economists say that values have no place in home economics and that *the* knowledge which people need for home and family life is scientific knowledge.

The interaction of values and scientific knowledge in decision-making and action, as described earlier in defining practical problems, is a world view espoused here as necessary for home economics. It is not anti-scientific; it accords to science that role which it can empirically and logically play in understanding and in solving human problems. It recognizes, however, that science occupies a partial role rather than being the totality in knowing and in decision-making.

The effects of the anti-intellectual approach to values and to practical problems has created what many students of the social scene consider to be a political and social crisis.[35] While Bronowski[36] and Polanyi[37] show an optimistic view of the progress of man and of thought, there are at times institutions and movements which threaten the "grand ideas" which have emerged in intellectual history.[38] The recent anti-intellectual movement with respect to human values is a regression to points which pre-date Dewey, the few philosophers at the Lake Placid Conferences, and even Kant.

The perennial nature of practical human problems. In defining the practical problems upon which home economics focusses its professional services and knowledge base, it is necessary that they be perennial in nature. That is, the concern is for problems of the home and family which are enduring or which are faced by each generation over an indefinite if not infinite period in time. There are (at least) two reasons for this: (1) the more significant problems of the home and family will be recognized and dealt with and (2) the home economist will be more intellectually competent in the services rendered society.

In order to recognize and deal with the more significant problems of the family, we have to remind ourselves that the concern is for problems which humans have *as humans* regarding home and family; therefore, the problem definition must focus on human needs. In terms of the consequences of home economists' services to society, the outcomes which are of concern are the effects which the home and family have and can have on humans. Stated in research language, home economists are concerned with defining dependent variables which bear upon conditions of the individual in the home and family and upon conditions in the family as a group. (In speaking of the individual and the family in this context, the concern is not for particular individuals or particular families but for all individuals and families.) Having defined outcomes of professional service or dependent variables in research in terms of the "well-being of individuals and families", problems then focus upon the accomplishment and maintenance of that well-being. Solutions are sought by defining and controlling appropriate independent variables in the environment. To illustrate, families face decisions about what to do with the elderly. This is not merely a question of what actions are available; the problem is what to do (in the family and in society) in creating environmental conditions for the elderly which would have consequences consistent with moral value (e.g., would preserve the personal dignity of the elderly and that of others involved). Families also face decisions about a dwelling in which to live. This is not merely a question of what kind of dwelling is currently stylish or of what can be economically afforded but a problem of deciding upon a dwelling which when lived in, would contribute psychologically, physically and aesthetically to the lives of individuals and the family as a group and to the community aesthetically and socially. Thus, the concern is for designing (in decision-making and action) an environment which will enhance the human aspects of life for the individual in his home and for the family. The danger is that problems will be defined only in terms of physical and social entities of the environment because that is where the *solution* lies. The problem *formulation* process is a different one and requires that we have a conceptual understanding of (1) the "well-being of individuals and families" and (2) the qualities of environment which affect that well-being and of how they affect it.

While the reference to "environmental design" is to architectural design in the following excerpt from Studer and Stea,[39] we can readily translate to environmental design in general.

> **Environmental problems have been erroneously formulated in most instances, due to the tacit assumption that what is required is a particular class of (or collection of) physical entities, e.g. a "building," a "school," a "house," a "civic-center," a "city," an "Indian village," (a variety of)**

"rooms." While any environmental problem typically requires some sort of physical system as a solution, problem definitions such as these are manifestations of linguistic (and conceptual) reification, not rational processes of formulating problems; the imposed bias places both cognitive and logical constraints on environmental decision-making which are rarely overcome. The problem is not one of simply "redefining terms" but of evolving an entirely new taxonomy of problem formulation. (pp. 130-131).

When physical and social entities become reified in faulty problem formulation, we focus on such things as food, clothing, shelter, existing economic systems, laws affecting the home and family as (presumably desirable) objects in themselves without regard for knowing or judging their human consequences. In doing so, we ignore the significant human problems of the home and family concerned with human spirit and personality and focus on immediate fashion, economic events, legal requirements, and social institutions or practices as givens not to be criticized.

When we formulate the problems with which home economics is concerned in terms of human concerns, we find that these are enduring problems in the sense that they are continuously faced by individuals and families. Certain conditions such as human dignity, freedom, and self-awareness are never achieved once and for all time; their existence and maintenance must be constantly sought for each person and each family group in continuous decision-making and action. Maturity in intellectual and moral functioning, we are learning, is not something reached with physical maturation but goes on throughout the life span.[40] Social change continuously takes place but the direction of that change is not automatically or necessarily in the direction of what is humane and morally sound.[41] It was Alice A. Chown who, in the 1902 Lake Placid Conference, pointed out a significant theme in intellectual history: "Every crisis in history has come from the effort of a people to embody some higher conception, every great movement of thought has had for its initiative a new recognition of the possibilities of humanity." Further, she said, "the home has been the center of the individual's efforts after perfection." (p. 31) Alberta Thomas, at an earlier conference, had indicated that "the home shall be the place where each member shall reach his or her highest physical, intellectual and spiritual development."[42]

Not only is there the continuous search for personal and societal improvement; there is a recurrence over time in the areas of significant decisions which must be made regarding the home and family. Some of these areas of decisions which each new generation must make and must enable the next generation to make have already been mentioned: what to do about the elderly and what to do about a place to live. There are others, e.g., what to do to help children and adults develop intellectual and moral potential, what to do to restore and mend the psyche (one's own and that of others in the family) in its bruising confrontations, what to do socially and politically to protect the rights of children in families, what to do about the use of material resources, what to do in one's relationship to the rest of nature (man being part but not all of nature), what to do in relating to persons and groups outside the family, and so on.

When the problems of concern in home economics are defined in time-specific, culture-specific, and situation-specific terms, we begin thinking of such questions as "How can women who now work outside the home also manage their home lives?" and "Now that sex roles are changing, how can the tasks of housekeeping be more equitably distributed?" In the shift to such immediate questions, three things happen. (1) The value questions are evaded in that what to do is ignored, since the end is automatically and unreflectively assumed, and the existing conditions (women working outside the home and changing sex roles) are accepted as good without examination. (2) The focus of concern is on largely menial tasks or jobs of the home and how to do them rather than on the intellectual and moral decision and action for human development and well-being in the home and in the larger society. (3) The knowledge base of home economics is fragmented and simplistic. When (1) and (2) occur, the significant problems of the home and family are not dealt with in home economics. Consequence (3) brings us to the second reason for formulating problems as perennial problems: the intellectual competence of home economists in providing services to society.

Professional fields such as medicine, social work, criminology, and education have special intellectual requirements because they are exposed, as Gouldner points out, "to special exigencies and tensions". Their theories and concepts not only must pass the requirements of respectable science; they must also be serviceable in terms of function to remedy human problems. The particular area of human problems with which a professional field is concerned has a conceptual and theoretic base to its intellectual requirements which is relevant to the diagnosis and solution of those problems. The intellectual requirements involve not only mastery of a body of esoteric knowledge; they also involve development of modes of thinking (in each member of the profession) which are critically reflective and creatively adaptive in using knowledge for diagnosis and solution of particular practical problems. It is only when the body of knowledge pertains to both the human and environmental variables with which the professional field is concerned that the professional is competent to use it in critical and adaptive thought. There is, then, a cumulative and continuing quality to this body of knowledge in that the knowledge focusses over time on the same areas of human and environmental variables in concern for the *same area* of human problems. While the knowledge becomes more refined and changes in terms of what is held to be true and in the perspective from which it is pursued, its relevance does not shift to

a completely different set of conceptual foci. It is the perennial nature of the practical problems with which the professional field is concerned which makes it possible for cumulative and esoteric knowledge relevant to those problems (and necessary for their solution) to be mastered and used competently by the professional person in the field. When problems with which home economics is concerned are defined provincially as immediate and culture-specific, the knowledge base in home economics is not conceptually and theoretically sophisticated and cumulative because it is consistently shifting in focus. All that is viewed as required by the professional approaches "cookbook" knowledge or a currently popular set of prescriptive procedures or techniques. Yet the "cookbook" knowledge neither diagnoses the real problems nor deals with them responsibly in terms of human consequences. It is precisely because significant human problems are ignored in formulating the problems of a professional field that the knowledge base of the field is simplistic and lacking in integrative framework. Brogan[43] was referring to the school in the following quotation but it could also be interpreted in reference to the problems with which professional home economics is concerned:

> **What we can do is to suggest that the world will change and give intellectual tools for understanding that truth, intellectual prophylaxis against the provincialism which suggests that only the most obviously current problems are the real problems. (p. 79)**

The social perspective on problems. Practical problems require a social perspective. There are several respects in which this is so. It has already been said that decision and action with respect to such problems have human consequences. (Failing to decide and act is action by default and also has human consequences.) That these consequences occur to members of society makes them social consequences. That practical problems must be viewed from a social perspective is, therefore, obvious. However, there are several other respects in which this is so and recognition of this point is important in the conceptualization of home economics.

In concern for the individual in the home and as a member of the family, there is a social perspective on practical problems. The individual does not exist in a socio-cultural vacuum. He has a history of interaction with other persons and with the cultural milieu in which he has lived. As a consequence of his history of interaction with others and with the culture, the person acquires certain ways of thinking, symbolic modes of communication, certain meanings attached to physical objects (natural and man-made) and to various experiences and roles, knowledge not discovered by his own personal experience, rules and norms of behavior, value orientations, patterns of daily living, and so on. Culture is not learned by individual experience nor is it biologically transmitted; it is learned socially by *interaction* with other members of the culture. This interaction of the person with his cultural milieu is not necessarily done without his reflection and criticism of the culture and of the society (although it may be so done). It is in reflective and critical interaction, as Franz Alexander[44] pointed out, that social and cultural change comes from human minds. However, in turn, the human mind is influenced by the cultural milieu which human minds have created. All of this has been said in order to point out that the individual in the home as well as the family are influenced by the larger society and its culture and, further, that the individual and the family participate with others in the shaping of the culture.

From the last paragraph, it follows that social and cultural conditions must be controlled for the well-being of individuals and families. We can recall what Alice Chown[45] wrote in 1902:

> **. . . the influences that have molded society have affected the family, for it is an integral part of society and has shared social limitations and incentives. It is impossible to separate the family from society and to treat it as a separate phenomenon. (p. 31)**

Some early home economists recognized the negative consequences of the industrial society on the home and family. Henrietta Goodrich[46] remarked in 1902:

> **Home economics aims to bring the home into harmony with industrial conditions and social ideals that prevail today in the larger world outside the home. (p. 36)**

However, this harmony was not to be created by having the "home be an organic and logical outgrowth of present industrial conditions and ethical standards". Instead, a social reconstructionist view was taken by Goodrich for she favored designs "to alter popular standards of living that men shall desire for themselves a higher standard." Ellen H. Richards, too, recognized the need to shape social conditions to nurture human aspirations and the human qualities of men.[47] She also recognized the need for knowledge to so shape social conditions.

> **We are aware that social forces like natural forces have their laws which cannot be suspended by out fiat, but as natural forces, clearly understood, may be directed into other than natural channels and made to do man's will, so most surely social forces may be deflected from one direction to another when sufficient knowledge is at hand. (p. 7)**

Thus, some early home economists were not conventional or morally naive for they did not assume that whatever social conditions exist are good. Their perspective has been echoed in social philosophy and among psychologists speaking philosophically. In writing of the consumption-oriented society, Hannah Arendt[48] said:

we have almost succeeded in leveling all human activities to the common denomination of securing the necessities of life and providing for their abundance. Whatever we do we are supposed to do for the same of 'making a living'; such is the verdict of society, and the number of people, especially in the professions who might challenge it, has decreased rapidly. (p. 110)

Franz Alexander[40] was concerned for "a change in the whole ethos of society" and of "the impoverishment of life which is an inevitable result of our sterile and exclusively living-standard oriented era". (p. 271) Fromm[40] wrote of the possibility of a society's having norms which impaired freedom and normalcy of functioning in individuals and groups:

If a person fails to attain freedom, spontaneity, a genuine expression of self, he may be considered to have a severe defect, provided we assume that freedom and spontaneity are the objective goals to be obtained by every human being. If such a goal is not attained by the majority of members in any given society, we deal with the phenomenon of *socially patterned* defect. The individual shares it with many others; he is not aware of it as a defect, and his security is not threatened by the experience of being different, of being an outcast, as it were. What he may have lost in richness and in a genuine feeling of happiness, is made up by the security of fitting in with the rest of mankind—*as he knows them.* As a matter of fact, his very defect may have been raised to a virtue by his culture, and thus may give him an enhanced feeling of achievement. (p. 15)

As problems, practical concerns of home and family are *shared* by members of society as areas where decision and action are required. For example, members of all cultural groups have experiences of good and evil in decision and action about birth, about child-rearing, about the relation between men and women, about learning and teaching, about those who can not cope for themselves (the sick or the deformed — physically or mentally), about crisis periods in life, about material resources, about poverty and wealth, about psychical nurturance, about being in touch with oneself, about the satisfaction of basic human needs. While the existing conditions surrounding the problem and the alternatives which are open may vary, the questions and problematic concerns are similar in their basic form. When social conditions make difficult the attainment of the good and the right in each of these areas, the problem of changing social conditions is also shared. This was pointed out by Caroline L. Hunt[41] in 1901:

. . . freedom for himself and others is not entirely at the command of the individual. No sharp distinction can be made between the freedom which the individual may control and that which he may not. He can, thru cooperation with other individuals, change social conditions and thus increase his own and others' freedom. He is therefore as an individual, thru his power to cooperate, partly responsible for all freedom.

Practical problems of the home and family are social problems in another sense: they are problems of a basic and significant social unit. The "home is the social workshop for the making of men," said Henrietta I. Goodrich[42] in 1902. People are first cultured in that environment and a significant part of that culture is the *nurturance of the human mind.* It is this significance of the home and family in the lives of persons which justifies the existence of home ecology or home economics. Ellen H. Richards[43] emphatically pointed out: "So long as the nuture of the human mind is best accomplished in the home, so long will the word Home stand first in our title."

The significance of the family as a source of influence on the personality and thinking of its young members should require no documentation for educators in schools. Recognition of family influence on schooling by way of attitudes, behavior, ways of thinking, concepts and beliefs held is reflected in diagnostic evaluation of children's school behavior and in a considerable body of educational research. Looking upon the family as itself an educational institution (without reference to efforts of other educational institutions) has in recent years received attention from many social scientists, basic and applied. For example, *The Family as Educator* edited by Leichter[44] reviews much of the work in this area. Further, as reflected in this reference, children are not the only ones educated in the family. We are learning that mental development is not completed with physical maturation.

There is a sense of the social significance of the home and family best reflected in philosophic reflection such as that of Gabriel Marcel[45] in "The Mystery of the Family". The family exists not merely as a statistic, an entry in a civil register, a biological or social phenomenon. "It exists only on condition that it is apprehended not only as a value but as a living presence." (p. 76) The value of the family is realized, according to Marcel, in reliving the experience of childhood and feeling a certain pride (not vanity).

We are proud to belong to a certain community because we feel that some of its lustre falls upon us. Pride . . . is a certain response made from the depths of my being to an investiture of which it behooves me to prove myself worthy . . . it is a constructive sentiment, helping to give me inner foundations on which to establish my conduct. (p. 76)

The family as a presence is "a protective skin" placed between oneself and the "world which is foreign, threatening, hostile." The tearing away of this protective skin, whether suddenly or slowly, by death or life is a painful process.

The home, in both its physical and symbolic sense, thus becomes a center of the family as a value and as a living presence — even after the protective skin is torn away.

> **The spontaneous and immediate consciousness of an *always*, a perpetual life, is associated with the familiar objects among which we live, with the setting in which the daily tasks are carried out, with the feelings which can scarcely be formulated of a tutelary presence incarnated in these things and in this background and which, as it were, deepens and colours the daily outlook . . . . All which tends to destroy the sense of a habitation and of permanence in the surroundings of a being in process of formation will contribute directly to the weakening of his consciousness of the family itself. . . . . The family tends to become simply an abstract idea instead of the very essence of an atmosphere a human being almost unconsciously inhales, an essence which imperceptibly impregnates and saturates his thinking, his appreciation and his love. (pp. 77-78)**

The substantive focus of problems in home economics. It has already been said that perennial practical problems of the home and family are the concern of home economics and that the perspective taken on these problems is a social one. What needs to be done now is to try to go a step further and establish conceptual limits to the particular substantive focus of problems involved. It would be easy to be global in our conceptualization and assume that all problems which the family has are within the scope of home economics, e.g., medical, legal, or architectural. To do this would be to place upon home economists presumptuous intellectual requirements for professional preparation which would be impossible to meet because of the diverse theoretical areas to master — not to mention the internal social problems such conceptualization would make. It would also be easy to seek to lay claim to a special or unique area of subject matter, i.e., to define the problems only in terms of subject matter. This, however, would be contrary to all that has been said so far for it is not the topic or area of subject matter but the type or form of questions with which home economics deals which makes it different from other fields or disciplines where there is study of the family. The family is the subject of study in many disciplines: philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, genetics, and theology, among others. Among the learned professions, medicine, law, architecture, and social work provide services to families and among the less learned occupations, so do garbage collectors, utility service persons and appliance repairmen. Service to families does not make home economics unique. Nor is it the tasks which members of families perform at home which provide a conceptual focus to home economics. If this were true, and we made analyses of tasks of the household to provide a focus, we would not be of professional stature; technical preparation would be all that would be required of those who practice home economics. This would be true for two reasons: (1) performance of the tasks would not require mastery of theoretical knowledge nor complex judgment effecting significant human consequences and (2) the tasks done in the home change over time so that there would be constant change in the focus of services provided to families and, therefore, in the subject matter of the field.

The position taken here is that *home economics is concerned with questions of what to do in areas of perennial concern (1) in the home and family and (2) in the culture or society to promote the quality of human life in the home and family.* It is further postulated that *the form of these questions is as follows: What should be done in the home and family (or in the culture and society) in X area of concern in order to achieve Z value (or values)?* (a) Part of the substantive focus of the problem lies in values attached to the *quality of human life.* (b) Part lies in the *perennial areas of concern.* (c) Still another part of the substance lies in *environmental conditions* (in the home and family or in the culture or society) which are to be changed or created. The particular environmental conditions to focus upon are dependent upon the problem being considered and must be identified in terms of conditions which influence accomplishment of the valued end. Nature of the perennial areas of concern has already been described. In an effort to clarify the substantive focus, it is necessary here to define what is meant by the quality of human life.

In referring to the quality of *human life* in the home, emphasis is placed on the life of humans *as humans.* Humans are part of nature and a species of animal but the only animal, so it seems, which molds itself. It is not merely the psyche or intelligence which distinguishes humans from other animals for other higher animals, too, have been found to demonstrate both. It is what the Greeks called "reason" and what others have called "spirit" which makes the human animal uniquely human. As Levi[56] points out, "Greek philosophy began in religious ecstasy and . . . . the wilder emotions haunted the Greek theatre before they were banished from the Academy and the Lyceum" (p. 31). The Greek philosophers sought to present a picture of the human soul in which emotion has its part but in which interaction of emotion with rational deliberation takes place as reason. Reason, therefore, went beyond sense perception and experience. The separation of emotion and intellect has heightened since the time of the Greek philosophers to mean irrational vs. rational and, with the advent of positivistic science, reason has taken on a more limited interpretation attached to the depersonalized meaning of technological man or the "organization man". Existential philosophy has recently served a purpose of helping us recognize that the human spirit is one in which man must use his reason, not merely on sense perceptions of objects outside himself, but in self-understanding and self-awareness including man's emotional needs. It is in this sense in which the human spirit is marked as Vivas[57] points out by "freedom, objectivity, and self-consciousness." Freedom is autonomy from that which belongs only to life and impulsive intelligence or to what Hannah Arendt[58] called "the animal necessities of life." Spiritual man, said

Vivas, is not tied to his ambient world in that he transforms the things of his world into "objects." Transforming these things into objects is to consider them "as what they are in themselves."

> **More simply put, spirit responds to the object seen, not through the modification of vital impulse, of organic need, but objectively because it is independent of organic need. An animal endowed with spirit responds *theoretically* to the things that come within the range of its experience, responds as a spectator, and thus grasps the relation of these "objects" to other objects to other objects and beyond to still further ones. (p. 333)**

However, human spirit is also, as the Existentialists point out, conscious of itself. It is through this self-consciousness that it converts itself into an object to consider for what it is. It is thus able through probing its depths in value perplexity to transform itself in terms of ideal values which are not tied to the organism's own needs.

"Home economics stands for," said Richard's Creed in 1902, that "which will most free the spirit for the important and permanent interests of society." The life of humans *as humans* in the home, focuses substantively on those elements which are relevant to the qualities of the human spirit: autonomy from the animal necessities of life, objectivity, and self-consciousness.

The quality of human life translates, in the *form* of the questions with which home economics is concerned, to the "Z values" to be accomplished. The quality of human life, like the quality of anything, can range from poor or intolerable to excellent (or over a spread of points on some other grading continuum). As a concept, therefore, quality of human life must focus on some systems of values or criteria by which the conditions of human life are assessed. Action, in questions of what to do, is not the exalting of *activity* for its own sake. Dewey[59] is helpful here.

> **Mere activity, blind striving, gets nothing forward. Regulation of conditions upon which results depend is possible only by doing, yet only by doing which has intelligent direction, which takes cognizance of conditions, observes relations of sequence, and which plans and executes in the light of this knowledge.**
>
> .....
>
> **Action, when directed by knowledge, is method and means, not an end. The aim and the end is the securer, freer and more widely shared embodiment of values in experience by means of that active control of objects which knowledge alone makes possible. (pp. 37 and 38)**

Judgment about the ends to be sought in the quality of human life in the home and family becomes essential; these values to be sought and fostered become part of the substance of the questions with which persons in the home and family are concerned. When family members are to make decisions and take action on perennial problems, it is in an effort to achieve in concrete experience the "securer, freer and more widely shared embodiment of values." To be of service to society and to families with respect to practical problems, home economists, too, must make judgments about the ends to be sought in the quality of human life. It is even necessary that home economists clarify and specify these values. Members of the more honored professions serving the public do judge the ends to be sought and do specify these ends as values in service e.g., health and alleviation of pain and disease in medicine, equal consideration of justice with respect to law, personal inner harmony and integration in social work. He was speaking of teachers as a professional group but a point made by Kristol[60] can be related to other professions.

> **If you have no sense of moral authority, if you have no sovereign ideas about moral purpose, you ought not to be educators. There are many technocratic professions, in which for all practical purposes the knowledge of means suffices — but education is not one of them. (p. 14)**

As indicated in the section on the perennial nature of problems in home economics, the valued ends become criteria used in judging the human effects of factually predicted consequences of alternative actions. There are those who will raise the question of the right of persons in a profession to specify valued ends and to organize its knowledge and service to the accomplishment of those ends. That is a very important question. Its answer is, "It depends on what those values are and how they are specified."

We are concerned that the values not be fixed values which prescribe only one action in each decision-making situation. "In rearing children to be morally responsible, *do X*." "In taking care of the elderly, *do Y*." "To get enough calcium, *drink a quart of milk per day*." Decision-making (judgment) can occur only if there are alternatives. Morality can exist only in an indeterminate universe said Schiller[61] and James.[62] This is so because we are no longer a moral agent when we do not, of our own free will, make the moral choice. Morality carries with it not only rights but also obligations in decision and action. It was Schiller who wrote of the deficiency of determinism (doctrine of fixed values) as:

> **not merely that it fails to do full justice to the ethical fact of responsibility, but that it utterly annihilates the moral agent. (p. 806)**

I believe that many home economists who question the identification and specification of valued ends do so on the assumption that those values most be fixed or deterministic. I, too, believe we have no right to specify such values. However, this value judgment (for that is what it is) is based upon more abstract values, e.g., of freedom to decide for oneself. But freedom is a *principle;* it is not fixed as to the choice to make but rather is a guide in assessing alternative actions (in this case alternatives regarding the selection

of values, e.g., prescription or determinism, enlightened self-determination, unenlightened self-selection, among others). Then, to probe further, freedom is itself open to examination and evaluation. The distinction between principles such as freedom, respect for human dignity, truth, and justice and deterministic rules about what to do is that the former are contextual while the latter are not. To be contextual means that each principle is related to the factual conditions about the concrete situation and the individual human beings involved. What behavior is respectful of human dignity in one concrete situation may be disrespectful in another. The same principle applies across all situations but its application is a complex and searching determination. On the other hand, deterministic values are rules automatically or habitually applied; their use makes us fearful of differences in thought and patterns of living, and, therefore, they are productive of conformity in thought and living.

Such an approach to valued ends is one which admits of infallibility in knowing and in judging. It also requires tolerance which is not absolute but which means that, in the conflict of opinions, it is credibility and superior attractiveness rather than the imposition of one's own presumed infallibility which causes a change in conviction about what is true or good or right. Thus, both cognitive truths and values are personal.[63] However, with the personal determination of truth and value, there comes an obligation said Schiller:[64]

> **Every man has an inalienable right to his opinion, to his personal reaction to his world — until he can get a better. For the right to his opinion is the correlative of his duty to improve it. (p. 260)**

All of this carries with it two requirements not only for home economics in its professional decision-making and action, but for the home and family where decision-making and action regarding perennial problems occurs. One requirement is the open society and the second is the open self of the individual.

Without an open society, the effects of various dominating forces (e.g., industrial, political, military) on mankind can go ignored. There is all too often the assumption that all social change is deterministic. (That's the way things are and nothing can be done about it.) An open society questions whether this is factually true. (Is it factually necessary that the quality of consumer goods be so poor that excessive consumption and, therefore, waste of resources occur in throw-away or that human health or life be endangered?)

Without an open society, value consequences are not publicly examined and evaluated. Again, there is all too often the assumption that whatever conditions exist, those conditions are good. For example, sociological studies show that many families (perhaps even a numerical majority) no longer assume certain obligations. This is assumed to mean that families *should not* assume those obligations; *what currently exists* is interpreted as a sign of *what should be*. The notion that whatever condition (or even whatever norm) exists in a culture, is right is, as Kaplan[65] has said, an "insidious doctrine" which assumes that "majorities or preponderant forces supporting a given policy" can not be mistaken (p. 389). Martin Luther King Jr. refers to this belief in his work, *Why We Can't Wait*.[66] There are times when, as the citation from Fromm in the preceding section indicates, there can be *socially patterned defects* upheld as virtues in a culture. It is as asinine to assume that whatever exists with respect to the family is good as to assume that when thousands of people are in fact starving, this is good or when thousands of children are being physically and mentally abused by their parents, this is good. In the open society, the conditions and norms of the society are open to critical evaluation and to change where change is deemed desirable.

The open self of the individual is also necessary for the kind of decision-making and action we are talking about. This openness of self is something which can be cultivated in the home and family. It is also something necessary in the profession if professional action is intellectually and morally sound. Sometimes the self-protective shield in which the individual wraps himself becomes so thick and hard (or is it that the inner core is so tender?) that little gets through. Said Kelly:[67]

> **It becomes an isolating wall, that the organism is deprived of much that would enhance it, if it could get in. Words bounce off this wall, unless the words express ideas in keeping with the individual's already established attitudes and prejudices. (p. 97)**

Cognitive developmental theorists, such as Loevenger[68] and Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder,[69] have identified the development of a strong sense of self or ego to be a gradual accomplishment in the process of maturing. That it is not accomplished by all adults (even those on university faculties) was found by Rokeach[70] in his work on *The Open and Closed Mind* — and has been observed in more personal experiences, I might add. Without an open self, the human spirit is dwarfed or excluded. The ambient world is a threatening place, security is sought in a subjective relation to the familiar objects (which can not be transformed into objects considered for what they are), and self-consciousness is too painful to examine one's own values and transform them into ideal values not tied to the organism's needs. The open self and the human spirit are developmental conceptions; we have the potential for them but it is thought and appropriate experience over time which enables their development. Herein lies an enigma: the open self is necessary to deal with the uncertainty and fallibility of deliberate action but the open self only develops by being a worthy participant in those deliberations and actions. This speaks to the developmental obligations of the family and to the need to perceive of home as a place for using the material and social surroundings, as

ends in themselves, but as means to autonomy, objectivity, and self-awareness. Such concern is not merely for growing children; it is also for the developing adult who needs privacy for reflective self-consciousness as well as social opportunity for further development.

There is in the above analysis of the quality of life in the home a recognition of the primacy of human personality as a value. However, there is also the recognition that the human personality does not become truly human except in an environment where that development is fostered and protected. Is that what was meant by Ellen H. Richards when she said, "The essentials for life in a home (are those which) can attain the best physical, mental and moral development?" And is it what Henrietta Goodrich meant when she spoke of the home as the "social workshop for the making of men?"

Mode of Inquiry in Home Economics

With the questions or problems of home economics being of the nature described above, the mode of inquiry appropriate to seek answers or solutions becomes more readily identifiable. We can not afford, it seems to me, to be naive about the various known modes of inquiry open to us as well as the hybrids which can be created for hybrid fields. To assume that strict science or applied science are the only modes of inquiry does not do justice to the nature of the problems with which home economics is concerned and where it is to provide help to members of society. There are the hermeneutic sciences, long known and used in Europe but only recently discovered by a new generation of scientists in anthropology, sociology, and history in this country. There are historical investigation, philosophic analysis and philosophic criticism, to name a few others. In writing here, I shall have to rely on your initial familiarity with a variety of modes of inquiry or your exploration of supplementary references since this is only *one* paper about several different complex areas.

Given the nature of practical problems with which home economics is concerned, it becomes obvious that neither strict science (positivistic science) nor applied science is *sufficient* to provide tools of inquiry for the solution of practical problems of the home and family. The mode of inquiry required is one which not only provides us with reliable knowledge of things as they are and of what, in fact, results from certain events or conditions; it must also provide us with reliable knowledge of what *ought to be*, of what is right and good (i.e., of value). Basic science and applied science do not provide us with the latter kind of knowledge although critics of both in modern society have demonstrated that they often legitimize exploitation through serving the standards of technical success, technical control, and efficiency rather than human interests and human development. Basic science (strict science) enables us to understand phenomena and to generalize about the empirical relationship between empirically based concepts. Applied science provides us an instrument for controlling factually what happens, how, and when in order to reach given ends. However, it does not indicate what should be controlled for what purpose or what ends and what means of control are morally justifiable. As demonstrated by Hume, normative statements can not be derived from descriptive ones. Thus, we seek not to confuse decisions about practical problems which are value decisions with problems of the empirical sciences. Given a particular goal or value, we can use theoretic knowledge from empirical science instrumentally to accomplish that goal or value. For example, given personal autonomy as a value, we can use theoretic knowledge from the empirical science of cognitive developmental psychology to help promote development of autonomy in those for whom we have obligation in nuturing the mind. We could, of course, also take personal dependence in others, rather than autonomy, as a goal and use the same empirical science to accomplish this opposite value. It was a number of years ago that Harry and Bonaro Overstreet wrote *The Mature Mind* but they had excellent examples of how knowledge about us as humans is used against us, e.g., in advertising. Recent critics are pointing out the same thing.[71] It is possible, therefore, whether purposefully or unwittingly, to use science to control human thought and behavior toward being robot-like, immature or retarded in development as well as toward personal autonomy, objectivity, and self-awareness. Where applied research involves assignments from clients such as business or industry, it is no longer neutral for it tries to serve the needs of clients largely in their terms. Those needs or values frequently are not the needs and values of the larger society. In writing of this problem in applied social psychology, Deutsch[72] recently wrote:

> **By restricting his value framework to the setting in which he is operating, a social psychologist may, for example, free the members of a management group within a firm with the consequence that it has more effective power to manufacture and merchandise an essentially worthless or fraudulent product. The position of consumers may have been damaged even as the situation of the firm has been improved. (p. 4)**

It is proposed here that the mode of inquiry appropriate to home economics is a hybrid one which combines science and philosophy. It is similar to what has been called "critical science" and "policy science." It will be described briefly here with references which are more detailed cited for your exploration if you desire. This mode of inquiry is, I believe, consistent with the early statement that home economics is "a philosophical subject, i.e., a study of *relation*, while the subjects on which it depends . . . . are empirical in their nature and concerned with *events* and *phenomena*."

The exploration of practical questions, Habermas[73] has written, is a critical argumentation which is:

> **distinguished from straight deductions or empirical controls in that it rationalizes attitudes by means of the justification of a choice of standards . . . the approval of a procedure or the acceptance of a norm can be supported or weakened by arguments: it can at least be rationally assessed. And this is precisely the task of critical thought, both for metatheoretical and practical decisions. (p. 7)**

Inquiry of a critical science nature is a hybrid in that philosophy and science are interrelated in inquiry into practical questions. Shroyer[74] has said that "critical science retains philosophic reflection as a mode of the critique of research practice and *for the substantive critique of ideologies.*" (p. 216, italics are mine). He has written further of critical science that it:

> **presupposes that all self-conscious agents can become aware of the self-formative process of society and self and with this knowledge achieve a historically conditioned autonomy. Thus the character of a critical science is unique insofar as it is concerned with the assessment of the socially unnecessary modes of authority, exploitation, alienation, repression.**
>
> .....
>
> **It is a science that in reconstructing the dynamics of individual or societal development tries to assess which are necessary norms and which are but remnants of power structure no longer humanly useful. (p. 225)**

In writing of policy research, Etzioni[75] has pointed out that, while applied research "deals with means taking the ends for granted," policy research "deals with values and seeks to clarify goals and the relations among them, as well as among goals and sets of means." It is, therefore, "inevitably critical." Starr[76] pointed out:

> **Critics select facts that are meaningful within their moral or aesthetic frames of reference. They must be faithful to the world of fact, but they interpret that world in terms of what they value; indeed, if they cease to do that, they cease to do criticism and become journalists, in the narrowest sense. (p. 396)**

The role of philosophic inquiry is important here and its special uniqueness has been pointed out by Bell:[77]

> **The intellectual takes as a starting point his *self* and relates the world to his own sensibilities; the scientist accepts an existing field of knowledge and seeks to map out the unexplored terrain. The impulse of the journalist is to be novel yet to relate his curiosities to the urgencies of the moment; the philosopher seeks what he conceives to be true, regardless of the moment. (p. 306)**

In an older article (than the above) by Gouldner,[78] policy science was identified as the clinical approach to applied science. In the clinical approach, the scientist does not take problems formulated by those served at face value; he looks underneath the obvious for latent problems. Further, he recognizes that knowledge is not enough to help the persons served to solve their problems, that solution and change rests also on values and cultural symbols of communication. Etzioni, in his analysis, shows Gouldner's concept of the clinical approach to applied science to be distinctly a different mode of inquiry than applied science and referred to it as "policy science." There is agreement between Gouldner and Etzioni on features of the type of science, nevertheless. Concerning the selection of concepts from basic science, all concepts are not equally useful. For example, concepts for independent variables (e.g., environmental variables) must be malleable or feasible to control. Modern urban living has been found to be highly correlated with mental illness but the feasibility of changing urban living to non-urban living in our society is not altogether feasible. However, crowded housing which contributes to the problem of mental illness in urban areas can be controlled. The concepts used by the professional may be abstract, but in translating to those who are served, the concepts are middle range in that they must be understandable, "not far removed from the observed world," and expressed in language common to both ordinary English and scholarship. Further, the variables are likely to be macrovariables rather than minute microvariables since the former are more broadly applicable in the different contexts of a practical problem and are more appealing to common sense.

There is a possible danger in the use of the term "policy research" for the mode of inquiry in home economics. It is that "policy" will be interpreted to mean that usefulness of the results of policy research is limited to policy makers in national and state government. While there is the need for home economists to provide the results of policy research to state and national politicians and to be active in the formulation of social policy, that is not the only interpretation. Individuals and families formulate policies also which apply to the lives of those in the home. It is in this sense also that decision-making and action regarding the home and family made by family members is a concern for policy. The first interpretation of social policy is related to conditions in the culture and society which have bearing on the concerns of the home and family in the whole society. The latter interpretation is related to environmental conditions which can be controlled by individuals and families within the home.

There is another danger in interpretating the term "policy research" in that it often applies to the single event. For example, when social policy becomes a major law, unless it is changed, it continues to serve as a guide. However, personal and family policies in the home are continuously subject to examination and to new "test cases" and, as pointed out earlier, must be made by each new generation. Decisions in the family

are not inherited in the way in which laws are in the cultural heritage; each person and each family must make them anew — even the decision to seek to change the law. There are, then, what might be called basic problems which recur with each generation — the perennial problems. The particular event or the particular social issue is merely a manifestation of the broader and more basic problem. Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment is a specific issue in the broader problem of moral judgment about what to do to develop and protect the humanness of all persons. The same might be said of social policy regarding child abuse, segregated housing, and similar matters.

The concepts needed in the knowledge base of home economics must obviously come from multiple disciplines and, in some cases, interdisciplinary concepts. That this is true is reflected in the conceptualization of home economics presented. A list (which I realize is incomplete) of the sources of concepts together with justification based on the nature of home economics is presented below.

1. Because home economics is concerned with values and with the process of value judgment (evaluation), some concepts come from philosophy, especially moral and social philosophy.
2. Because there is concern for the development of the individual in the home and family, some concepts would come from developmental psychology and other branches of psychology, some (related to physical development) from physiology or medicine and nutrition, some from cultural anthropology (on the relation between the individual and the culture including the physical objects and tools of the culture) and some from logic.
3. Because the family is a social unit which influences the lives of its individual members, some concepts would come from social psychology, some perhaps from other branches of sociology, some from cultural anthropology and history.
4. Because the physical environment of the home and the community influence both the individual and the family, some concepts would come from psychophysics, some from psychology, some from history, some from psychiatry, some from cultural anthropology, some from social philosophy.
5. Because the individual in the home and the family as a unit is affected by norms, policies, and conditions in the larger society, some concepts would come from social philosophy, economics, political science, social planning, social psychology, sociology, communications.
6. Because each person in the home is expected to be an active and reflective thinker, some concepts would come from the psychological studies of thought processes and philosophical analyses of the modes of thought and verification.

A Conceptual Structure for Home Economics

Given the conceptual form of the problems of home economics described above, it is useful (as an intellectual tool) to indicate the organization of the conceptual content necessary to answer those questions. If the purpose of home economics is to aid persons in solving practical problems of perennial concern regarding the quality of human life in the home and family, and if the solutions to those problems lie in the environment of the home and family and/or in the larger environment of the culture and society, then the substantive content of the field of home economics takes on a means-end organization. That is, *in a given area of concern*, certain means will (probably) lead to the accomplishment of a given valued end. In more concrete terms, in rearing a child to have a sense of moral concern, helping the child to reason in value situations and to judge the consequences of alternative actions, contributes to his/her development toward moral maturity. The intellectual (including emotional) environment within the family is controlled (by the parents in this case) in order to reach a valued end: development toward moral maturity of the child. In this case, the valued end is first determined and understood and empirical knowledge of means to that end is selected and used. There are times when the valued end may deal with process, e.g., What should people do to *improve their way of making value judgments?* In this case, the means are found in analytic knowledge of what is involved in the thought process of making value judgments as well as empirical knowledge of the development of thought processes. Improving the environment for intellectual and moral development often requires (as a means) improving the thought processes of those who seek to control that environment for the accomplishment of valued ends.

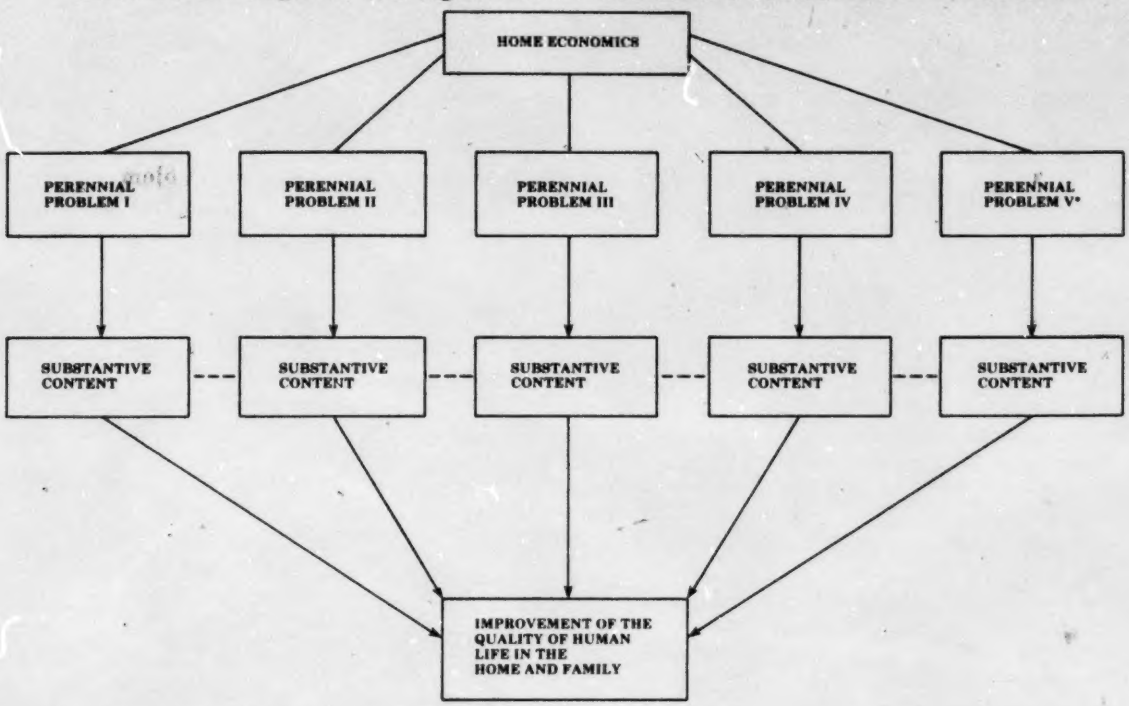
To present a conceptual structure of means-ends for substantive content in home economics, I have chosen to use an interaction or transaction paradigm. This paradigm assumes that human consequences are the result of the interaction of persons (as individuals or as groups) with the environment or, to say it differently, the transaction between the individual (or the group) with the environment. This view holds that persons can change the environment, a point which has already been discussed. Further, this is a relativistic view which holds that there is a context of the person or group which influences the human interpretation of that environment and, therefore, the effects of it on the person or group. While I am not suggesting such a thing as a "group mind," it is recognized that groups and cultures have norms and certain interpretations of symbols (behavioral, language, physical objects or events) which are not universal among groups or cultures. Behaviors, language, and physical objects or events, therefore, being cognitively interpreted differently, affect the persons involved differently. For

example, Baldwin[79] has reported that in isolated, rural areas of northern Norway, there are maternal behaviors which an American observer would regard as maternal rejection or dislike of a child. To illustrate, a small child sitting in a doorway where the mother needs to pass is silently picked up and moved by the mother with no sign of emotion. Yet the children in this Arctic area do not behave the way rejected children should behave as defined in child psychology. We have also known children who have been physically punished by loving parents who interpret the punishment as given out of parental love in an effort to socialize the children instead of interpreting the punishment as unfair or rejecting. In both illustrations, rejection was not a quality of the behavior as *behavior;* belief about the meaning of an action is in the mind of the person (the child, in this case, as well as the actor — the parent). Similarly, in connection with our example of moral development, a young child is highly concrete in functioning and has not learned logical operations. Therefore, for a parent to present an abstract moral principle and a detailed moral argument is not an effective means from the context of the child's stage of development to promote moral development while it would be effective with many adolescents. Context, therefore, is significant for us to consider to avoid an oversimplified and absolute belief that X (as a means) will always produce Y (a valued end). The selection of X must be made in contexts of the culture, the society, or the individual persons involved.

Einstein's theory of relativity was accepted in physics not too many decades ago; the simple notion that whether an object moves or not depends on where the observer is standing. Physics is about 500 years old as a science. If we use physics as a referent in time, in another 400 years, relativity (rather than an absolute fixed reality) will be accepted in other fields less than 100 years old! Viewing human action in context would help us avoid oversimplified answers to complex problems; we would recognize the total inadequacy of prescriptiveness as a way to help people in decision-making and action. We would also become less shackled by monistic views from our own particular culture or social class or personal need structure.

A general paradigm for conceptual structure of the substantive content of the field of home economics is presented first to give a view of the whole (Table 2). Then, parts of the general paradigm are taken to analyze further in order to examine conceptual categories in greater detail.

Table 2. A Paradigm for the Organization of Substantive Content in Home Economics



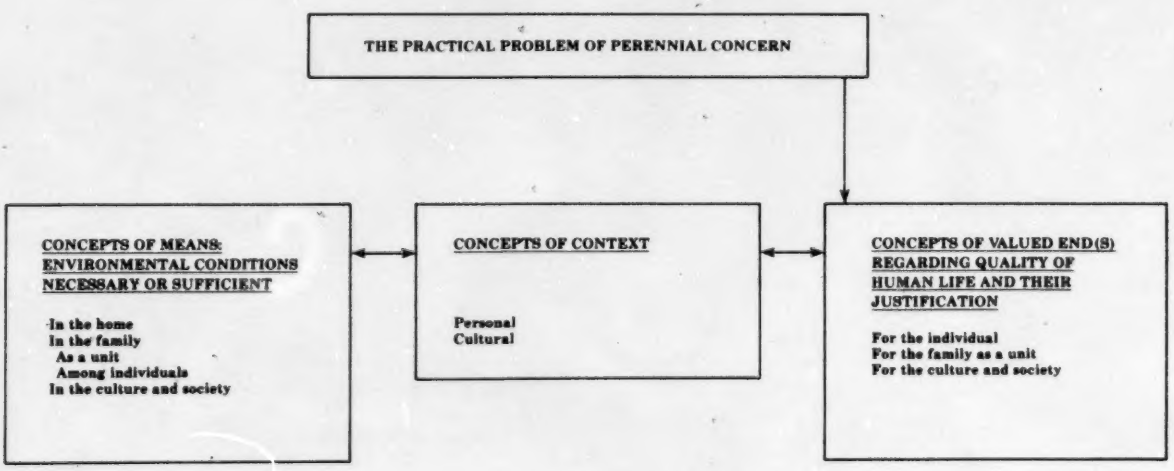
— — — Conceptual relationship between areas of substantive content, e.g., concepts regarding processes such as evaluation

*The total number of perennial problems is not specified here and the numbering is only illustrative

Now, let us go to an examination of Table 2. It has already been pointed out (in the section on substantive focus of problems) that what environmental concepts are relevant to solutions depends upon the perennial concern or problem being considered. General valued ends also become clearer when abstract principles are defined in middle range concepts related to the particular problem area. The contexts which are *in fact* relevant are also logically determined by the problem. Therefore, for a field of study concerned with professional service to society in helping to solve perennial problems, it is necessary to identify those basic perennial problems. Solutions can be sought only in relation to identified problems. Proposed solutions become real solutions only when the valued end is accomplished. Therefore, the substantive content of home economics is selected and organized around each perennial problem identified. Since home economics is concerned with service which enables family members to make morally and intellectually defensible decisions and to act on those decisions, part of the substantive content deals with thought processes involved in making such decisions. These processes are involved in each area of perennial problems and, therefore, become common to the substantive content of all problems. However, there may well be other concepts which may be common to two or more problems. To illustrate, if one problem is what to do in rearing children and another with what to do with the elderly, there may well be certain concepts regarding environmental conditions (means) as well as certain concepts regarding human consequences (concepts pertaining to ends sought) which are common to both problems.

Table 3 shows the substantive content for each perennial problem in greater detail. It becomes necessary, for each perennial problem identified, to define the valued ends which are relevant to what is valued (at a more abstract level) in the quality of human life. Thus, concepts of ends to be accomplished in the particular perennial problem are middle range concepts; they are less abstract than the concept of quality of human life but are necessarily consistent with it. These value concepts (of ends to be accomplished) are central to the selection and organization of substantive content in each problem area, as Kotzin[80] has pointed out. Without first determining (and justifying) the end (s) to be accomplished we fumble needlessly among countless irrelevant environmental conditions for concepts of means and may never really focus in on solutions to the problem. These valued ends can not be viewed in a compartmentalized way by focussing only on the unit with which the problem is concerned without doing damage to the broader system of which the unit is a subsystem or to component parts of the system. To illustrate, if what to do in rearing children is viewed only in terms of valued ends regarding the child, we may well do damage to the family of which the child is part and to the larger society since there are other persons whose lives the child will touch now and in the future. Similarly, if only valued ends regarding the family are considered without concern for the individual family member or for the larger society, again damage is done to other parts of the system.

Table 3. The Substantive Structure of Content within Each Perennial Problem


THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF PERENNIAL CONCERN
CONCEPTS OF MEANS: ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS NECESSARY OR SUFFICIENT
In the home
In the family
As a unit
Among individuals
In the culture and society
CONCEPTS OF CONTEXT
Personal
Cultural
CONCEPTS OF VALUED END(S) REGARDING QUALITY OF HUMAN LIFE AND THEIR JUSTIFICATION
For the individual
For the family as a unit
For the culture and society

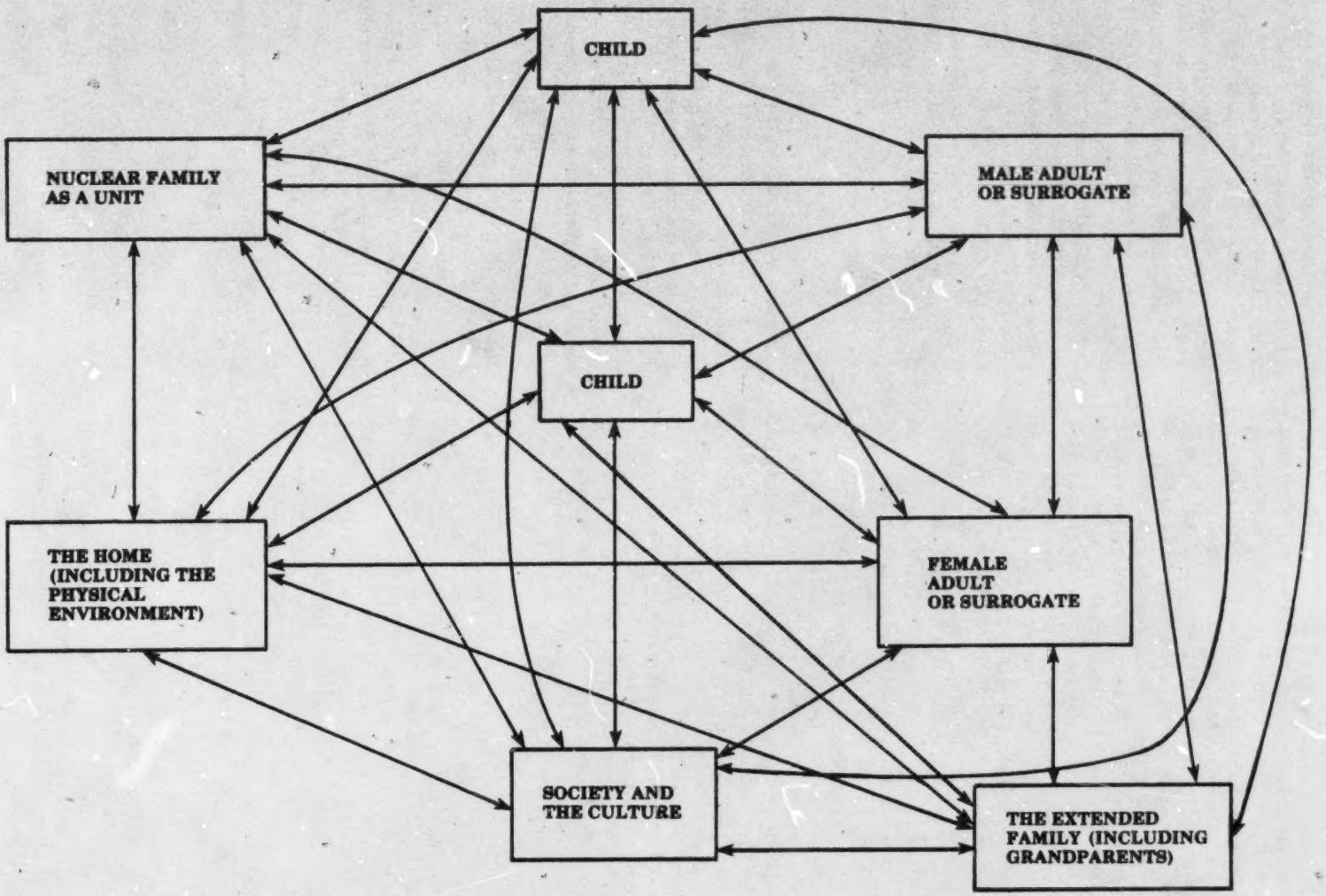
Concepts regarding *valued ends* are defined both analytically and empirically. Analytic definition comes in the use of ordinary (English) language in that we use concepts already commonly accepted and defined. A certain term in English has an agreed-upon meaning (dictionaries are compiled to show these agreed-upon meanings). The verification of these meanings of terms is through rules of logic and language (analytically) rather than through experience (empirically). Scholarship demands that we follow the rules of language and logic in conceptual meanings associated with terms (or words). Thus, philosophy often aids in explicating conceptual meaning through analysis of the uses of a term. However, if we wish to conduct empirical research using a particular concept (or interpret and apply such research), the concept must be defined in terms of observable qualities or in terms of a theory which enables us to mark occasions in observation when the concept applies. To illustrate, if moral maturity is one valued end toward which what is done in rearing children is directed, there is already in ordinary language a conceptualization of "maturity" and of "moral". (I am not saying that *everybody* has arrived at the conceptualizations but that there are certain meanings common to ordinary usage and to scholarship. Some individuals and groups may have inadequate or distorted conceptions but that does not remove the rules of language *commonly accepted*.) Interest in moral maturity arises out of our knowledge of its ordinary meaning. Psychological research of a longitudinal (developmental) nature across cultures has aided in the development of a theory for defining moral maturity.[81] Such research was aided by prior philosophical explication of the concept.[82]

What action to take in the problem area in order to try to accomplish the valued ends is drawn from empirical knowledge of environmental conditions which effect the quality or condition identified in the particular valued end. For example, there is empirical knowledge of environmental conditions (social and intellectual) which contribute to development of moral maturity. Knowledge of these conditions is conceptual in nature rather than being rules of behavior. By being conceptual knowledge, the relevant contexts can be taken into account before deciding what behavior is appropriate under the circumstances. In illustrating with what to do to promote development toward moral maturity, the concepts of socialization and of moral reasoning (in moral conflict situations) are applicable. However, how to behave toward the child in socialization and moral reasoning must be interpreted through the personal context of the child (e.g., his developmental level) and the cultural context or the symbolic meaning attached to particular behavior in socialization. The process of moral reasoning would be common across cultures but the specific content of that reasoning would vary according to cultural interpretation. Kohlberg[83] cited the case of two young boys, one American and one Taiwanese, both of whom were at a stage of moral development where other people are used instrumentally to satisfy one's own needs (in terms similar to those of the market place). However, in dealing with the same moral conflict about whether a husband should steal a drug to save his dying wife, each responded in terms of the customs and symbolic meanings of his culture. The American boy would save the wife because she "might be an important lady like Betsy Ross, she made the flag." The Taiwanese boy would also save the wife but "because if she dies he'll have to pay the funeral and that costs a lot." The point is that concepts in the context are the *same in principle* but the *behavioral interpretation varies* with cultures.

Concepts of means in the environmental conditions and concepts of context are defined in the same ways as those concepts which are valued ends. The justification for their inclusion in the substantive structure differs, however. Justification of the value concepts is philosophical in terms of what is ideally right or good. Justification for including certain concepts of means and concepts of context is empirical; there are factually based reasons to believe that the interaction of certain environmental conditions with certain personal and cultural contexts will probably result in the valued end.

The action to take in solving a problem is determined by a thought process which relates values we seek to accomplish with what we know about environmental-contextual cause and human consequences. There is no certainty that family members will solve problems or that we will always help them to do so. Human knowledge and human judgment are fallible in personal as well as professional decision-making and action. Presumably, however, the various service professions provide help through application of reliable substantive knowledge with a structure such as that outlined in Table 3. If problems are not fully solved, their solution comes ever nearer and they are dealt with through the best judgment possible. In the case of home economics, this service is to enable family members, individually and collectively, to make the best possible judgments. Therefore, they, too must master and use the substantive structure of content also but (likely) in less abstract terms than those of us in the profession.

Table 4. The Direction of Effects in Family Members' Decision-Making and Action



To move to Table 4, the intent is to show the interaction between and among individuals in the family, the nuclear family as a group, the home, the extended family, and the society and culture. In pointing out the directions of effects, it is not practicable at this point to document from research each of the points made although it would be possible to do so. I am sure that, from your own experience and knowledge of research, you can illustrate each. The concern here is for showing the environmental sources of human consequences in the home and family and the origins for creating change in those environmental sources.

Each individual family member affects other individuals in the family: each child has an effect on each other child and on each parent or surrogate parent, each adult affects each child and each other adult. Each individual in the family affects the family as a unit and is, in turn, affected by the family as a group. Each individual is affected, as is the family as a group, by the home — that ideational and emotional formulation attached to the familiarities of the physical setting of one's private and intimate life. And, of course, the home is created in both its physical qualities and its ideational-emotional features by the individual and the group who live there. The extended family also has its effect historically on the adults of the family and its current and historical effects on the members of the new generation as well as the nuclear family as a unit and the home. The extended family is also affected by individuals in the nuclear family and by the action this latter unit takes. The society and the culture influence all individuals and the nuclear family as well as the home and the extended family. But, further, the human animal is a restless one not content with *adapting to* his environment; he must *change it* by creating a culture and social institutions to meet not only his needs but also his hopes and dreams.

The interaction of units specified in each rectangle in Table 4 is to emphasize the multi-directional effects of each unit. This is important to recognize for we often give attention only to uni-directional effects as in the effects of parents on a child, the effects of the culture on the family, or the effects of the physical environment on the individual. The existence of multidirectional effects impresses on us once again the danger of compartmentalized thinking in the structure of the substantive content of the field.

There may be some questioning of the units specified on the grounds that they appear to represent some middle class conception of the family which has a married couple and two children with the extended family hovering near. This particular paradigm (Table 4) is not a value conception of the family. It is intended to be isomorphic with reality in showing the possible units of the family and, perhaps, typical ones in spite of our frequent preoccupation with "newer" forms of the family. Certainly every family does not have two adults and two children. There are modifications needed to fit *some cases* by blanking out one adult or one child (or adding ten children!) Sometimes all adults are of one sex; sometimes there are additional adults. It is necessary to specify sufficient numbers of categories in the nuclear family in order to show the types of interactions possible. I am also aware of the questioning of the nuclear family but this is a value question as much as it is a factual or predictive one. Much of our preoccupation with "newer" forms of the family is done ahistorically without recognition that the so-called "new" forms have existed many times throughout history. Yet some semblance of the nuclear family, with extensions into the existing families of the adults who formulated a new family, has continued to prevail.[84] There have been variations in the power structure of the family (patriarchal, matriarchal, equalitarian, child-centered) but these are other matters than composition of the family. The intellectual obligation of home economists as students of family life should be to assess the *human consequences* of various forms of family life rather than to accept every form and mode of family life as it socially evolves as good because it is "new" or even because it exists.

Implications of the Nature of Home Economics for School Curriculum Content

Several years ago Schwab[85] wrote that "the question of the nature of practical knowledge, of theoretical knowledge, and of the relations between them" was treated more "cavalierly" than any other issue in the American school. (p. 24) Typically the two types of knowledge are seen as having no relationship. In the minds of some school people, theoretical knowledge is an epithet while the reverse is true when students "with good minds" are discouraged (by school norms as well as counseling) to stay out of the practical subjects. The view of practical knowledge as problem-solving decision-making and evaluating was described in Perspective B in the curriculum section and will not be repeated here. What is done below is an attempt to show the relation between that curriculum perspective (which you had already chosen by identifying the long-range aim and curriculum strategy which you did) and the nature of home economics as outlined above.

First, there are the same concerns in the controlling aim of curriculum and in the purpose of home economics. The curriculum aim of enabling students *to use* what is learned in *autonomous critical thinking, problem-solving and action in a democratic society* is quite consistent with helping persons on practical problems of perennial concern in the home and family. Both are concerned with values and with the *use of knowledge* in *active, critical, creative thought process* in the *solution of problems.*

There is also agreement in the generalized method in education and the mode of inquiry for home economics. Critical analysis, problem-solving, and democratic social processes in educational method, when made more specific, involve critical appraisal of value orientations as well as of the reliability and adequacy of knowledge. Social problems are solved when some valued end is reached and their solution is dependent upon the contextual factors in the problem situation as well as knowledge of means to reach the end. There is in the educational method of the curriculum perspective and in the mode of inquiry in home economics a combination of philosophic inquiry and empirical knowledge. (Even children *do* such inquiry voluntarily although their thinking processes usually need improvement.) Democratic social processes involve a moral orientation as does deciding and acting on what to do to improve the quality of human life in the home. Both require an open society and the development of an open self.

Home economics as outlined and Perspective B in curriculum are identical in conceptualization of how knowledge is to be organized: around significant problems with organization dependent upon its use in life situations. Intelligent action is dependent upon active thought processes by the knower or the one who acts. There is no dichotomy between emotion and cognition, between knowing and valuing. There is a personal element or perspective in knowing but developmental maturing contributes to objectification and the use of rational processes and standards for justification and verification. There is a continuity between life experiences and the decisions and actions regarding the home and family on the one hand and the content of learning on the other hand. Value claims are justifiable as objective claims to what is ideally right or good.

The same assumptions are made about learners in the curriculum perspective as are made about humankind or persons in home economics. The learner in school and the person in the home and family are, ideally, autonomously critical and creative in thought, morally responsible, an organism continuous with nature but with the uniqueness of human spirit. The learner and the individual in the home and family, given an appropriate environment with which to interact in terms of his personal and cultural context, grows or develops toward maturity; life for developing people and, especially, their way of responding to life is not static. Meaning is significant in learning in both educational institutions: the school and the home. This meaning is both cognitive and emotional and is derived from the familiar surroundings of the culture and the home, from first-hand experience but also from reason and reflection. Human beings are restlessly active (barring defect or disease) and seek to transform their environment to meet their needs as well as their fantasies rather than merely adjusting to the environment.

So also are there the same assumptions about society and man's relation to it as outlined in the curriculum perspective and in home economics. Social conditions and norms (including those in the social unit which is the family) are not to be merely accepted as givens but evaluated for constructiveness vs. perversity and for significance vs. triviality. While members of society are influenced by the culture and the society of which they are part, culture and social institutions are created by human minds and what is created can be improved. Such improvement, however, is dependent upon intellectual and moral enlightment which makes evaluation and improvement possible and which makes the will to act autonomously a personal necessity.

The content of home economics is practical in its purpose, in its organization, and in its use. That is, the purpose, organization, and use are concerned with problems of what to do in areas of perennial concern to persons in the home and family. The clarification and understanding of these problems as well as the knowledge of substance and process necessary for solution requires abstract concepts and theories. However, these abstract concepts and theories may often have to be translated into middle range (less abstract) ones for clients (including students) who are seeking to learn them. There is, therefore, an interpenetration of practical knowledge and theoretic knowledge in the content of home economics. Theoretic knowledge (both philosophic and scientific) is necessary for students to diagnose problems, i.e., to go beyond the felt needs of the organism to see when they exist and to clarify their nature. This is especially necessary in order to see that the immediate problem is not necessarily the real or important problem. Problems are not seen as problems beyond one's own organic needs without some conceptualization of how things *ought* to be (what is of value) as well as how things *are*. How things *ought* to be, it was pointed out earlier, should not be dealt with concretely in terms of practice or life style for this is prescribing a monistic perspective. Rather, values, as generalized concepts, are principles used as guides and their development must be in terms of abstract principle. ("Abstract" is a relative term and in a curriculum for a range of developmental levels, the degree of abstractness can increase with the student's level of development.) Since practical problems have conditions somewhat unique to the persons and the situation involved, solutions to problems can not be provided (as such) in content. Instead concepts relevant to the environmental conditions which have bearing on the consequences of concern must be explored (and in active conceptualization processes) to develop sufficient conceptual complexity for generating alternative solutions to problems.

Last, but not least in importance, the content of home economics curriculum does not make a dichotomy of substantive content and processes of learning. Since the concern is for a long-range aim of critical,

creative, and morally responsible decision-making and action, *the thought processes implied in that aim must be a part of the content of curriculum.* This is done in two ways (as pointed out earlier): (1) by including as subject matter the nature of such processes as making value judgments, identifying and defining problems, making a search for information relevant to problems, judging the reliability of information and the validity of arguments, and so on and (2) by providing learning activities which involve active conceptualization, use of concepts in analysis and critical reasoning, in creating generalizations from specific information, in generating alternative ways to consider problems and solutions, and other similar activities. If the process of curriculum is separated from the content, we are assuming that students only learn traditional subject matter in school and that they do not learn ways of thinking and relating to the world (including other people as part of that world). This assumption is false (as documented earlier) and we only proceed to hide part of the curriculum content from ourselves and others (mostly from ourselves for the students are usually aware of it).

Decision-Rules for Selecting and Organizing Home Economics Curriculum Content

The decision-rules follow from the earlier sections of the paper which serve as rationale for them. They are suggested on the basis that you find credible and desirable both (1) the elaboration of the curriculum perspective (Perspective B) which you had identified in the long-range aim and curriculum strategy prior to my work with you and (2) the conceptualization of home economics presented in the second major section of the paper. Because elaboration would be repetitive of the rationale and its parts, the decision-rules are stated briefly in a list below. They follow, as indicated earlier, the hypothetical form of if-then statements. However, they are a special form in that the *if* indicates an end or conceptualization of curriculum or home economics, and *then* indicates the nature of the decision to be made (not the decision itself — that is *your* work).

1. If the aim of the curriculum is to help students become increasingly critical, creative, and morally responsible in decision-making and action regarding the home and family *and* if the substantive content of home economics is organized around problems of perennial concern (1) in the home and family and (2) in the culture or society to promote the quality of human life in the home and family, *then a first decision (or set of decisions) must be determination of what those perennial problems are* in order to organize the curriculum around them. (This determination is not, of course, considered a final or complete listing.)
2. If decisions made and action taken regarding the home and family (by students) are to promote the quality of human life in the home and family, then *it is necessary to identify basic concepts of valued ends (basic normative concepts) for each problem which are consistent with desirable quality of human life.*
3. If home economics is to help people with solutions to the problems identified in No. 1 above *and* if these solutions are not ready-made but must be decided by each concerned person or family in light of conditions unique to the persons and the situation involved, *then several decisions must be made regarding a variety of conceptual areas for content of the curriculum.*
   a. *concerning the concepts regarding processes (modes of inquiry) involved in such decision-making and action*
   b. *concerning environmental concepts relevant to solutions to the problem (or means to the valued ends) realizing that different environmental conditions will need to be considered for each problem*
      (1) interpersonal conditions within the family
         — between individuals
         — between the family as a group and individuals
      (2) conditions in the home
      (3) conditions regarding the extended family
      (4) conditions in the culture and society
         — which affect the individuals
         — which affect the family as a unit
   c. *concerning the contexts in which different acts (considered in decision-making) would be interpreted*
      (1) personal contexts (the developmental levels, psychological states, or personalities of the persons involved)
      (2) cultural contexts (symbolic meaning attached to actions considered)
4. If the aim of the curriculum is to help students make increasingly critical, creative, and morally responsible decisions regarding the home and family *and* if home economics is concerned with helping individuals and families solve perennial, practical problems as described, *then it must be recognized that concepts of the self, of interpersonal relations, and of modes of thinking are learned through the processes of the curriculum and therefore, decisions must be made regarding what concepts are to be built into the curriculum processes of learning.*

NOTES

1. See, for example, the following: P. Goodman, *New Reformation* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1970); A. S. Neill, *Summerhill* (New York: Hart Publishing Company, 1960); C. R. Rogers, *Freedom to Learn* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1969).
2. Report of the Harvard Committee, *General Education in a Free Society.* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1945), p. 51.
3 J. Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1916), p. 386.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 381.
5. For examples of this conception of curriculum see: J. S. Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960); G. W. Ford and L. Pugno (Eds.) *The Structure of Knowledge and the Curriculum* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1964); J. J. Schwab, "The Concept of the Structure of a Discipline," *The Educational Record* 43: 197-203, 1962.
6. P. H. Phenix, in A. H. Passow (Ed.), *Curriculum Crossroads* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1962), p. 64.
7. J. Holt, *How Children Fail* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1964), p. 176.
8. Z. Lamm, "The Status of Knowledge in the Radical Concept of Education," in D. Purpel and M. Belanger (Eds.), *Curriculum and the Cultural Revolution* (Berkeley, Calif.: McCutchan, 1972), pp. 124-142.
9. See as illustrative: L. E. Metcalf and M. P. Hunt, "Relevance and the Curriculum," *Phi Delta Kappan* 51: 358-361 (1970) and J. S. Mann, "High School Student Protest and the New Curriculum Worker: A Radical Alliance," in J. R. Squire (Ed.), *A New Look at Progressive Education* (Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1972), pp. 325-344.
10. J. Dewey, *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1902), p. 4.
11. Phenix, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
12. Neill, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
13. See, for example, D. E. Hunt and E. V. Sullivan, *Between Psychology and Education* (Hinsdale, Ill.: The Dryden Press, 1974); L. Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence: The Cognitive-Development Approach to Socialization," in D. A. Goslin (Ed.), *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1966), pp. 347-480; E. V. Sullivan, "Developmental and Contemporaneous Individual Differences and Their Role in Curriculum Decision-Making and Teacher Training," in B. Joyce and M. Weil (Eds.), *Perspectives for Reform in Teacher Education* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972, pp. 164-203).
14. A. M. Weinberg, *Reflections on Big Science* (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1967), p. 76.
15. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, op. cit., p. 24.
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